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THE CHURCH'S HOLY YEAR

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THE

Church's Holy Year.

HYMNS AND POEMS

FOR

All the Sundays and Holy Days of the Church.

BY THE

REV. A. C. RICHINGS, M.A.

VICAR OF BOXMOOR.

"This is in the main a new work."—*Preface.*

Parker and Co.

6 SOUTHAMPTON-STREET, STRAND, LONDON;

AND BROAD-STREET, OXFORD.

MRS. VINEY, BOXMOOR.

1887.

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Preface.

THE object of the writer in publishing this volume, is to illustrate in simple poetry the teaching of the Church of England, as contained in the Lesson, Epistle, Gospel, or Collect connected with each Sunday and Holy day throughout the year, and in those occasional services provided for our use.

Much has been done in this way since 'The Christian Year' appeared; and the revised Lessons now contain subjects for special teaching, which were not imparted on the same Sundays or Holy days, at the time when that favourite work was published.

Any effort to make the members of our Church familiar with her teaching, may surely claim a friendly greeting.

Some who will not read a sermon, may perhaps be induced to read a Hymn or Poem containing like lessons; and if by the artless guile of a few verses, any soul is led to meditate on truths given for our present peace and future welfare, the end desired will be attained.

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Morning.

'Early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up.'—*Psalm* v. 3.

SWEET is the breath of early dawn,
When flowers are decked with robes of dew,
And clouds are streaked with crimson rays,
While hill and dale their charms renew.

Pure are the beams of her first smile,
Which bid farewell to shades of night;
Like angel spirits come to bless,
They bring us nearer to the Light;

And nearer one day to their home,
If we be 'children of the Day;'
Children whose steps they love to guard,
And o'er whose lives they've sung their lay.

But though they shine alike on all,
They look down on different faces;
Some beaming bright with steadfast hope,
Others lined with care-worn traces.

And yet they whisper in our ears,
Some truths for all to lay in store;
They tell how God has watched our lives,
And kept our cup still running o'er.

They bid us rise and praise His name,
'For all the blessings of the light,'
And give to Him another day
Of talents spent for Him aright.

Who can behold this constant flow
Of day and night, of work and rest,
And fail to see a Father's care,
By which we all are daily blest!

If early morn imparts such joy,
As nature wakes to catch her light,
And all creation seems to dance,
As though inspired with new delight

If birds pour forth their joyous songs
To greet once more returning day,
And every harp is tuned afresh,
Shall we refuse to join their lay?

Oh! wake our hearts when rosy morn,
Sheds brightness on our bed of rest;
And bid us rise, good Lord, to own
The Love which reigns in Thy great breast.

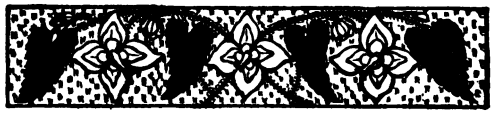
Tossed to and fro with grievous pain,
How some have longed for morning light;
While we have been refreshed by sleep,
And calmly passed the hours of night.

For these and all Thy daily gifts,
The fruits of Thine unceasing care,
Lead us to kneel and praise Thy name,
And think of all the grace we share.

Quickly the hours go speeding on,
Like laden ships with out-spread sail;
How soon the last will come and go,
And life have told another tale.

A tale of joy, if rightly spent;
A tale of grief, if thrown away;
A record true—however spent,
Revealed upon the judgment day.

The closing scene is drawing near;
Be with us Lord when it is here;
Let not our sun sink down to rest,
Until in Thee we're fully blest.



Night.

'He giveth His beloved sleep.'—*Psalm* cxxvii. 2.

THE daylight dies, the sun is sinking fast
Below the distant hills or plain;
Soft twilight wraps the earth in calm repose,
And night once more usurps her reign.

This is the hour when nature's seen to rest,
And o'er the sea the moonbeam plays;
When solemn stillness rocks the world to sleep,
And stars pour down their silver rays:

When nightingales, or waters heard afar,
Bring music to the listening ear;
And gentle dews descend on closing flowers,
While distant sounds are wafted near:

When every moan is hushed, except the wind,
Or heavy sighs of bitter grief,
Which makes the night appear too long for him,
Whose sleepless soul finds no relief.

How great the boon which thou dost bring with thee;
Rest for the body spent with toil;
Rest for the mind oppressed with many cares;
Calm rest—though only for a while.

Yet there's a rest far better and more sure,
Than the soft sleep of passing night;
The rest our souls obtain in Thee, O Lord,
The fountain of eternal Light.

It is not here, where light and shade are seen,
And trials great beset our way;
It is beyond, where truth and joy prevail,
And night is lost in endless day.

But still this rest of faith is one sure type
Of that sweet rest enjoyed above;
Oh grant us more of her bright rays of hope,
To gladden hearts which own Thy love.

As evening shadows gather thick around,
And call us once more to repose,
May they remind us all of Thy command,
That with true prayer each day shall close.

Now work is done, we would retire to rest,
Leaning on Thee—'The First and Last;'
With hearts acknowledging our many sins,
And seeking pardon for the past.

With prayer for those in sickness or in pain,
For mourners sad whose hearts are tried;
For all those loved ones whom we cannot see,
That Thou wilt be their Friend and Guide.

And as we sleep beneath Thine outstretched wings,
And dream of joys for which we long;
May we awake to think of that bright morn,
When fervent prayer shall end in song:

The song of countless hosts in that glad hour,
When Thou wilt come to wake the dead;
To know that death and grave are passed and gone,
And conquered by their living Head!

O welcome Night! which helps us now to bear
The weights laid down on earth's wide floor;
As thy foot rocks the cradle of our care,
We're hushed to rest, and fret no more.

Help us, good Lord, to give each day to Thee,
That we may rise when nights are o'er,
Like summer flowers, restored from wintry graves,
To live with Thee for evermore.

Advent Sunday.—I.

'The night is far spent, the day is at hand, let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.'—*Romans* xiii. 12.

DARK shadows lengthen with the close of day,
And souls now blessed with light must not delay:
The Bridegroom quickly comes—Why slumber here?
The night's far spent, and your salvation's near.

The Church on earth is His belovèd bride,
Bought by the blood which came forth from His side;
The royal feast is now outspread for all,
Why then should we neglect the Advent call?

It soundeth now, though only for a while,
Rolling along through court and hallowed aisle;
Then dies away, until the cry we hear,
Returning oft with each returning year.

Awake ye sleepers! Listen to the call
Addressed by your Redeemer's voice to all;
Cast off the evil deeds which cloud the night,
And put ye on the armour of God's light.

Remember how He rode in triumph meek,
When bitter tears were streaming down His cheek;
And ponder well the words upon His tongue,
For all the works of darkness men had done.

Grieve not His Spirit with such want of love;
For you He died—for you He lives above:
Give Him your heart in this your day of light,
And keep your lamp for ever burning bright:

Then shall the Bridegroom own you as His bride,
Greet you with joy, and place you at His side,
Bid you sit down as His accepted guest,
And dwell with Him, in everlasting rest.

Advent Sunday.—II.

'Watch ye, therefore; for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning.—*St. Mark* xiii. 35.

OUR blest Redeemer will return
To right the ills this earth hath borne;
We cannot tell the day or year,
If distant far or very near;
We only know that He will come
And leave awhile His blessèd home;
Come with His great and glorious train,
To mete out righteous loss or gain;
Come though His warnings be unheard,
And many hearts remain unstirred;
Come though mankind refuse to know
Their Advent joy or Advent woe;
Come to dispel the heavy cloud
Which hangs o'er time like some dark shroud,
The cloud first seen in Eden fair,
When in the curse we had our share.

It may be in the quiet eve,
When nightly shadows thickly weave;

Or at the noontide, when the sun
But half his daily work hath done;
Or in the hour of early dawn
Before the world awakes to learn;
Ere the cock begins his crowing,
And the wheels of toil are stirring,
While the heavy dews are glitt'ring,
'Neath the moonlight softly waning:
Come He will, as He hath spoken,
For His word can ne'er be broken.

Perchance some may be bent on pleasure,
Or gloating o'er their earthly treasure;
While others may be pressed with care,
And thoughts which only waken fear;
The merchant thinking of his wares,
The tradesman counting up his shares;
Yet He will come, though stubborn sins
Bind erring hearts in cruel chains;
Come to amend whate'er is wrong,
Come to complete His work begun,
Come to renew this mortal frame,
Now sorely marred by grief or shame;
Come to attune these hearts, so slow
To sing of all the love they know.

Oh! keep us, Lord, from fatal sleep,
The sleep which caused Thine eyes to weep;
Defend us now from idle dreams,
Light Thou our lamps with brighter gleams,
And let them never, never fail,
Lest we Thine Advent cease to hail.

Second Sunday in Advent.

'Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.'—*Romans* xv. 4.

AS Israel on their dreary march
Gathered sweet manna day by day,
And on the sixth laid up a store,
To feed them when it ceased to lay;
So must we daily eat that food
By which our souls on earth are fed;
And all its holy truths digest,
Marking with care what God hath said.

It is the light we need to have
As on our weary path we tread;
And only when this light goes out,
Shall we the darkness have to dread:
It is the staff for all to take,
When making for the better land;
The road is rough, but we are safe,
While grasping it within our hand.

See how earth is ever drinking
The showers which fall upon the ground;*
Raising stores for every season,
While marching on her yearly round:
The snow-white mantle with its warmth
Protecting well the hidden seed;
The dew-drops too with sparkling light
Contributing their little meed.

And God's own Word we 're plainly told,
'Shall not return to Him as void,'
If we like children at His feet,
Will bring to it a child-like mind.
Then let us prize this blessed means,
The Church this day points out to all;
Her golden candlestick now shines,
Shall we neglect her Advent call!

The call which bids us trim our lamps,
To pierce the shadows of the night;
The call to rise and use that Word
Which makes us 'children of the light';
The call to hear the midnight cry
Which ushers in the Bridegroom's voice:
Oh! how shall we His coming greet
Unless we make His Word our choice?

* Isaiah lv. 10, 11.

Third Sunday in Advent.

'Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.'—*St. Matthew* xi. 10.

TO-DAY we hear the Baptist's cry
In Juda's lonely wild;
'Repent, believe, for Christ is nigh,
Ye must be reconciled.'

Bold as a lion was this man,
True messenger of God;
No double aim could any scan,
Who listened to his word.

Such heralds have been ever given
To witness, Lord, for Thee;
Some prophet, priest, or voice from heaven,
To be Thy ministry:

And when on earth Thine eye did see
A flock without a guide;
Thy tender heart devised a way
To lead them to Thy side.*

* St. Matthew ix. 36, 37, 38.

Not angel hosts—but mortals here,
Were taught by Thee, O Lord,
Thy sheep to feed, Thy lambs to rear,
And bring them to Thy fold.

Thy ministers are still on earth,
To point to Thy return;
To Thee they owe their sacred birth,
To Thee they bid us turn.

'Bride of the Lamb, awake,' they cry,
'Cast off the midnight gloom,
The coming of the Lord draws nigh,
Which seals the sinners' doom.'

Wait on the means which Christ hath sent
Thy footsteps safe to keep;
Some guide ye need, and this is lent,
While climbing up the steep.'

Such is the lesson of this hour,
Taught by the Church's round;
And they who own His quickening power,
Will note her Advent sound.

Fourth Sunday in Advent.

'O Lord, raise up (we pray Thee) Thy power, and come among us, and with great might succour us.'

Collect for the Sunday.

AS on the battle-field of war,
The captain waving high his sword,
Nerves the soldier to press onward,
And to obey his leader's word:

So should the Advent of our Lord,
Returning to this earth again,
To reward His faithful soldiers,
Uplift the soul where hope doth wane.

How oft He tries to cheer the heart
With these few words—'Behold I come!'
Come quickly, though it may seem long,
Come surely too, to bring us home.

Come to restore what we have lost,
To right this life with all its wrongs,
To mend the harp which sin hath torn,
And make it play triumphant songs.

That wailing from a mother's heart,
'Why hear I not his chariot wheel?
This morn I saw him safe depart;'
Is one which parents still can feel.

Her son returned not to his home,
He fell by stratagem and craft;
And Sisera's mother never dreamt
Of Jael's tent and subtle shaft.

We need not tarry thus in vain,
For Him whose victory is won;
The spoils are sure which He will bring,
Each conqueror then will be His son.

He comes e'en now these Advent hours,
By holy Sacrament and prayer;
By seeds of truth so freely sown,
That we for Him may all prepare.

Thy presence Lord we greatly want,
To succour us with daily grace:
Our strength is weak, our foes are strong,
'We're sorely hindered in our race.'

Now on life's battle-field we stand,
Where fiery darts fall thick around;
And many foes are lurking nigh,
To use the snares which strew the ground.

When earth was at its darkest hour,
  Thou didst come down to dwell below,
And now when heavy clouds are seen,
  Come down again Thy power to show.

Help us to fight as warriors brave,
  And when Thine Advent day we see,
Beneath the shadow of Thy cross,
  Be 'more than conquerors,' saved by Thee.

Christmas Day.—I.

'And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.'—*St. Luke* ii. 10.

WE hear the song far overhead,
Which made the plains of Bethlehem ring,
Startling her shepherds in the night,
With 'peace on earth, good will to men':

We see a blaze of dazzling light,
Filling their souls with sudden awe,
Until the angel told to them,
The joyful tidings which he bore.

We need not ask—What mean these signs,
These visions from the unseen world;
The message which they came to bring,
For ages long has been unfurled.

The glorious truths to us revealed,
The hymns of praise now rolled along
By faithful souls lit up with joy,
Unfold to us the angel's song.

Let tower and spire ring out again,
  The blessèd story of Christ's birth,
And let His ministers proclaim,
  How peace in Heaven came down to earth;

How good will flowing from above,
  Dispenses blessings far and wide;
The fruits of that unbounded love,
  Made known to us this Christmas-tide:

Then will our God be glorified,
  By acts of faith and adoration,
Till every tribe in every land,
  Is seen to be 'a holy nation.'

All changes here, except Thyself:
  Our Christmas gifts last but a while,
They come and go like flakes of snow,
  Seen melting on our sea-girt isle.

But this day's gift will never part
  From those who bear it in their mind;
It cannot die, it cannot fail,
  For in this gift, our *all* we find.

To celebrate this wondrous birth,
  And swell the anthem heard on high;
We meet once more in God's own house,
  To hush in songs each earthly sigh;

We turn our thoughts towards the spot,
Where Jesus slept 'The Prince of Peace;'
Himself the God incarnate there,
Come down to bring the world's release;

We kneel upon the altar step,
Before the mercy seat divine,
And think of love, we cannot *know*,*
Though we may *say*—'This love is mine.'

Oh! may our hearts in tune be found
To join in every holy sound,
Catching the echo of that song
Which has for ages been as one,
And sending back to heaven above
The tribute of unfeigned love:
Then shall we partake together
Of those blest joys, which none can sever,
And wait to reach that heavenly choir,
Whose anthems swell, but never tire.

* Ephesians iii. 19.—'The love of Christ which passeth knowledge.'

Christmas Day.—II.

'And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.'
St. John i. 14.

HOW meekly Jesus trod this earth;
His birth-place here, a lowly shed
Outside a village in a cave,
Hard by the spot where cattle fed.

There laid they down His infant form,
While angels wondered at the sight; *
Himself a stranger in this world,
And yet the world's eternal Light.

Plain were the swaddling clothes He wore,
Rough was the manger where He lay,
Yet the Incarnate God was there,
Revealed in flesh as on this day.

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* 1 Peter i. 12.—'Which things the angels desire to look into.'

Upon the throb of that blest life,
Seen in a bustling crowded khan,
The world's salvation was to rest,
So simple was the Father's plan.

The palace high of princely state
Was not required where power prevailed:
Here was 'The Prince of Life' Himself,
Whose living strength hath never failed.

We like Him were wrapped in clothing,
When we put on our infant form;
Though now we've left our first estate,
And had to face life's heaving storm.

The pomp of heraldry and fame,
Are not the diadems of glory;
Bestow on us O Lord *Thy fame*,
And we receive the priceless dowry.

With Thy true Church in every age,
And with the bright celestial throng,
Let every soul on earth unite,
To celebrate what *Thou* hast done.

We need to ponder on Thy love,
Thy true humility and power,
Till we have ceased to praise Thee here,
And joined above the heavenly choir.

St. Stephen's Day.

'And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.'—*Acts* vii. 60.

THERE is a charm in being first,
The first in all we do;
The first to storm the citadel,
The first to face the foe.

'The noble army' may be great,
Each martyr may prove strong,
But Stephen's name stands out as chief
Among that mighty throng.

The first to die for his dear Lord,
To kneel so calmly down,
And pray for murderers in their rage,
Whose stones fell thick around.

The first to fall asleep in Christ,
The first to shine so bright
That lookers-on beheld his face,
And wondered at the sight.

Saint Alban's name thou dost revere;
We visit his great shrine,
As first to suffer in this isle,
For creed which now is *thine.*

But this day's saint has greater charm,
With higher lessons to impart:
And he who marks his peaceful sleep,
May nerve his wavering heart.

Oh! bring us back once more again,
These faithful men of yore;
Whose hearts were glowing with God's faith,
Whose love was running o'er.

St. John the Evangelist's Day.

'The disciple whom Jesus loved.'—*St. John* xxi. 20.

ETERNAL love! Thou source of all pure joy;
Who shall describe the greatness of thy power,
Loading the earth with all the charms we see,
And shining on through every day and hour.

Thou art the child of our unchanging God,
Enriching all on whom thy hand is laid:
No wonder Jesus loved that saint the most,
Who drank most deeply at thy fountain head.

Thou wert the jewel sparkling in his crown,
Whose name the Church this day delights to praise;
When ages yet unborn have passed away,
Earth still to thee her offerings great will raise.

This grace shall ever have its own reward,
Its treasures sure, where 'er 'tis seen to rest,
And he received far more than other men,
Who leaned upon his Master's loving breast.

Bright too was the vision from his dear Lord,
With glory such as none beside e'er saw,
In that wild rocky isle, where naught was heard,
Except the sea-bird's cry, or billows' roar.

Yes there—where solitude was seen to reign,
A voice was heard—'I am the first and last,'
From Him who holds 'the keys of hell and death,'
Proclaiming truths, 'as with a trumpet' blast.

And when old age had nearly run its course,
And he no longer could the truth declare,
Tradition says—Saint John would speak of love,
So truly did he live and breathe its air.

O life of love!—True child of God thou art,
Descending low to raise the drooping heart:
Like ripened corn upon a fruitful land,
Thine ears are waiting for the reaper's hand.

The Innocents' Day.

'In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children.'—*St. Matthew* ii. 18.

HOW many storms are seen to fall,
Upon the lofty hill or plain,
The winter storm with heavy snow,
Or summer showers of gentle rain.

And such is life upon this earth,
It has its days of joy and grief;
Its sunny lights and sombre shades,
And nights of pain without relief.

Around the coasts of Bethlehem,
A scene of woe was long forecast,
Of mothers weeping for their babes,
And Rachel with sore griefs oppressed.

Oh! who can hear of this sad tale,
The tale of Herod's cruel plot;
Without some sympathy within,
For babes destroyed, but not forgot.

And yet we know those little lambs,
Have safely reached the Shepherd's fold,
Good angels came at His command,
Who blessed such lambs in days of old:

In Paradise they safely dwell,
Knowing rest which we are seeking,
Far away from earthly trials,
And beyond all scenes of weeping;

No clouds o'ershadow infant eyes,
Which just look down on fallen earth,
And then are sealed, as if to shun
The sins which cling to mortal birth.

Had Bethlehem's mothers ever known,
That heavenly dream in their sad day,
When Herod's sword their babes destroyed
And crushed at once their infant lay;

That dream which told of unseen foe,
The angel brought one winter's night,
To make the Virgin guard her child:
They too had saved their own by flight.

These spring-tide flowers so quickly plucked,
The Lord has added to His crown;
They dwell with Him in mansions fair,
The early fruits of martyrdom.

This little flock of chosen lambs,
  We meet to celebrate to day;
To dwell on their untimely end,
  And o'er their lives and deaths to pray;

To pray—that we may be as they,
  Both innocent and undefiled,
And think how oft Christ said when here,
  'Ye must be as a little child.'

First Sunday after Christmas.

'Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins.'—*St. Matthew* i. 21.

MANY a wreath of faithful love,
Is weaved around a name,
Unknown beyond the family home,
By any deed of fame.

The world delights to celebrate
The works of mortal man;
In village church, or minster aisle,
How many names we scan.

On sunny plains and golden sands,
The Pyramid of might,
Stands out before the traveller's eye,
Unhid by day or night.

Why heed not men the greatest Name,
The Name adored in heav'n;
The greatest Name that's known on earth,
The Name by angels given.

As summer flowers their incense breathe
O'er gardens in their bloom;
Or smiling rays light up the earth,
When all around is gloom;

So doth the sound of Jesu's Name,
Shed fragrance all around,
To those who walk amid the bowers
Where He Himself is found.

Fulfil to us this Blessed Name,
And save us from our sin,
Then with Thy saints we'll give Thee praise,
When we our crown shall win.

The Circumcision of Christ.

'And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, His name was called Jesus.'
St. Luke ii. 21.

ONE wintry day, when stillness reigned around,
And wreaths of snow lay deep upon the ground,
Two forms were walking o'er a lonely down,
An aged father with his little son;
Both making for their home.

The boy stopped short, and cried aloud for fear;
The father said—'My child, to me keep near;
Mark where I place my feet upon the snow,
And in my footprints deep, your feet let go;
So shall we reach our home.'

To travellers here, thus speaks the Church of God,
Bidding them mark the footsteps of their Lord,
Go where He trod, and note each great event,
Which shows the path on which His days were spent,
Thus making for their Home.

This day we see Christ circumcised on earth,
To mark the rite which sealed the eight days' birth;
To carry out His Heavenly Father's plan,
And keep the law Divine for sinful man:
Thus pointing to our Home.

May we improve the year we now begin,
By growth in grace and hatred of all sin;
By Circumcision true our members free,
While in His daily path our light we see,
Thus making for our Home.

Guide us, O Lord, along Thy hallowed road,
As men baptized in childhood to their God,
And leave us not to stray, whate'er betide,
But keep us ever walking by Thy side,
Until we reach our Home.

Second Sunday after Christmas.

'He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He shall not quench: He shall bring forth judgment unto truth.'—*Isaiah* xlii. 2, 3.

HOW marked the contrast between victory won,
By warriors brave, with glittering sword and shield,
And that great triumph which our Lord obtained,
By word and miracle of friendly deed.

The deaf were made to hear, the dumb to speak;
The lame to walk, the blind to have their sight;
While captive prisoners found their chains released,
When sitting in the sunshine of His might.

No cry was heard along the crowded street,
Where He was seen to bend His peaceful way;
Except that cry called forth by varied wants,
So often mingled with His toil by day.

When once the fiery zeal of Peter sought
To guard His holy life by unsheathed sword;
He chode at once his quick but erring love,
And healed the ear of Malchus with His word.

Yes, though angels were waiting overhead
To come to earth and do His righteous will,
Yet even they must not put forth their strength,
To stay the steps set out for Calvary's hill.

The hearts oppressed with fear of grievous sin,
Like reeds swayed to and fro by river's side,
He ever sought to comfort and uphold,
And with harsh words was never known to chide.

With arm of power, and sympathy as strong;
He walked amid the fallen sons of grief,
Known as the sure Physician of all woes,
Ready to hear each cry and give relief.

Where He beheld a spark of new-born life,
He tried by word or deed to fan the same:
'The smoking flax,' He never stooped to quench,
But kindled in its stead a brighter flame.

The shallow brook with narrow rugged bed,
Rolls on its waters with a babbling sound;
But rivers deep pursue a *silent* course,
Within the channel where their streams are found.

Too deep was Jesu's love for man to know,
It courted not the noisy blast of fame:
Angels looked down, but could not understand
The mystery of His great Incarnate Name.

Such is the power on which the Church depends,
Such is the help we need to mould the heart;
And not those weapons forged to crush the truth,
So oft resorted to by tyrant's art.

Lead us O Lord to feel Thine unseen power,
When using armour made for warring hour,
To know *that* peace and trust which is our strength,
If we the victory would gain at length;
And when we hail Thee on Thy glorious Throne,
May we lay down our arms beside Thine own.

The Epiphany.

'We have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him.'—*St. Matthew* ii. 2.

STAR of the East which came to light
A world o'erspread with darkest night,
To show mankind both near and far,
That Jesus is our 'Morning Star.'

How blest are they who early rise
To follow Him with longing eyes;
Counting their earthly gains as loss,
If they o'ershadow His true cross.

Ready to traverse hill and dell,
To worship Love which none can tell;
And never halting till they find
That One on whom they've fixed their mind.

For ages long, beneath the lid
Of Mercy Seat and type lay hid
The blessed truth this day unfurled,
For every nation in the world.

As wise men knelt beneath Christ's feet,
Where every virtue deigned to meet;
They worshipped Him as Lord of earth,
Rejoicing greatly at His birth.

They laid down gifts most freely brought,
For words could not reveal their thought;
And now their deeds to us repeat,
How gifts and worship ever meet.

As waves receding on the strand,
Leave marks behind upon the sand;
With music soft, or solemn roar,
For ever playing on the shore:

So should our hearts for ever sing,
The praises of our heavenly King;
Leave footprints clear when we are gone,
To mark *some* deeds of love we've done.

Thrice blessed day which brought to earth,
The tidings of a Saviour's birth,
And led mankind to know and see,
The Light of His Epiphany!

O Jesu be our Shield and Light,
With brightest rays dispel the night;
And leave us not until we gain,
That land of light where Thou dost reign.

First Sunday after the Epiphany.

'How is it that ye sought Me? wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?'—*St. Luke* ii. 49.

THE feast of the Paschal Lamb is over,
The tribes are on their homeward way,
And friendly smiles with neighbours are exchanged,
Beguiling thus the hours of day.

But hark! amid the hum of voices loud,
We catch the cry of anxious fear;
The startling news is passed along the road—
'The child of Bethlehem is not here.'

No earthly friend could still His parent's heart,
With speed they now their steps retrace;
Through the temple gate they haste and look around,
With sorrow on each careworn face.

And oh! the welcome sight which met their eyes,
And cheered those hearts which glowed with love;
The missing child is found 'mid learned scribes,
Unfolding wisdom from above.

Few words spake He—but such as all should note,
'Why wist ye not that I must be
Where'er my Father's voice points out the way;
Why sought ye Me despondingly?'

Let every tender child this lesson learn,
And mothers too drink in His word,
Then will they boldly tread in duty's path,
Fearless of all except their Lord.

Second Sunday after the Epiphany.

'And both Jesus was called, and His disciples, to the marriage.'—*St. John* ii. 2.

GREAT is the power of sympathy
To soothe life's frequent ills;
One gentle word or look of love,
How many a throb it stills.

We're told to weep with them that weep,
To share in others' mirth,
And Jesus went to Cana's feast,
While dwelling on this earth.

Those water pots filled up with wine,
That nought might mar the feast,
Have they no truth for us to read
When we receive a guest:

No truth to whisper in that day,
When we put on the ring,
Which links two hearts to wedded love,
And joys which life may bring:

No thoughts of Him, Who still looks down,
On all the days of man;
No prayers to kindle for those two,
Whose future He doth scan?

When youth has flown on eagle wings,
And years her charms destroy;
Our life if blessed by Him will be,
A life of sober joy.

Thy presence Lord we need to change
The water into wine,
The daily gifts of life to bless,
And on our wants to shine.

We often fail to seek Thy grace,
When we sit down to share
The food which Thou hast made for man,
And miss the better fare.

O sanctify each earthly joy,
And bless the silent tear;
Whatever be our present lot,
If Thine, we need not fear.

Third Sunday after the Epiphany.

'Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.'
St. Matthew viii. 2.

'Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy.'
St. Matthew viii. 6.

HOW oft we see this truth fulfilled,
That Jesus all our sorrows bore;
As mothers feel their children's tears,
When they their little griefs outpour.

That wayside cry from one unclean,
It found an echo in His heart;
He spake to him a kindly word,
And bade his leprosy depart.

His faith was weak—he only cried
'Lord if Thou *wilt*, Thou hast the power;'
But straightway it called forth the help,
Which fell on him that self-same hour.

'Unclean, Unclean,'—the leper said,
To every one who came too nigh;
Though shaven head and wasted form,
Seemed to demand no warning cry.

Sad type of sin, and all that's vile,
Of sinful thoughts and impure heart;
'Unclean, Unclean,' is still our cry,
Only from Christ we need not part.

He knows our every want and grief,
And marks each thought which rules the mind,
He bids us 'ask that we may have,'
And 'seek that we may truly find.'

O Thou who felt for sick and sad,
And by Thy touch made lepers whole,
Stretch forth on us Thy healing hand,
And cleanse anew the contrite soul.

We must be washed—we are defiled,
By words and deeds which Thou dost know,
O wash us clean, and we shall be
E'en 'whiter than the falling snow.'

That master thought not of himself,
Who left his home to find the Lord,
His only thought—a suffering slave!
When he exclaimed—'Speak but the word.'

The slave who waited on his wants,
Now lying at the gate of death;
Whom he so late had often seen
With smiling face and blooming health.

'The leper cleansed'—'the servant healed,'
  Should make us pray for all we know;
Do we their living faith possess
  When on like errands sad we go?

For others' ills we have to plead,
  Unworthy though we are to come,
And faithful souls will surely pray
  For those who wait on them at home.

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany.

'Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.'—*St. Matthew* viii. 26.

A BOAT was seen upon the angry deep,
With Jesus sleeping near the stern,
Unmoved by fear, unshaken by the storm,
For no dark fears could he discern.

The waves fast sweeping o'er that little craft
Which danced so wildly on each billow,
And yet the Master in unbroken sleep,
With head reclining on His pillow:

That pillow hard, like Jacob's sleeping stone,
A narrow bench against the rudder,*
Where the steersman sat to guide the vessel,
Alike in cold or summer weather.

* 'On the low bench where the steersman sometimes takes rest, was pillowed the head of Jesus.'—*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah.—Edersheim.*

The anxious cry on that tempestuous night
  Which woke the Saviour then at rest,
'Save Lord, we perish,' our boat is sinking fast,
  All hope hath now forsook our breast.

The calm reproof which chode their groundless fears,
  And then the word of holy peace,
Which stilled the winds and waves that roared around
And brought at once their safe release.

The thought that here was God's own chosen ark,
  With Jesus and His twelve within,
Now tossed about with grievous fear and doubt,
  As we this day are tried by sin.

What lessons shall these hours of fear unfold,
  To lookers on who will be taught;
Lessons more precious far than purest gold!
  Or any gifts which it hath bought!

Learn we to ask, while on life's rolling sea,
  If we be sailing for the shore;
Resting on Him who calmed the stormy lake,
  Or idly sleeping at the oar.

Drifting along, away from settled peace,
  Like sea-weeds tossed upon the foam,
Our anchors up, our moorings all untried,
  Away from God and His blest Home.

Nay more than this—if Christ's few words of peace
Brought rest and safety to that crew,
Whose boat was filling fast with heavy seas,
Learn we to lean upon Him too:

To lean in time of trouble and of care,
When contrary winds and storms oppose,
To lean upon Him, as our Guide, our All,
And so regain our lost repose!

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany.

'The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat.'—*St. Matthew* xiii. 24, 25.

WHILE Gennesaret lay like a child at rest,
With neither wind nor storm to heave her breast;
And every hill around with light was blest;

A crowd was gathering by the water-side,
To catch a glimpse of Him men oft deride,
And many barren hearts the Lord espied:

He would not let them congregate for nought,
Some lessons true by parables He sought
To teach the throng, His mighty fame had brought.

The sower scattering far his precious seed;
The foe who planted tares in harvest mead,
To mar the corn created for man's need:

The stony ground on yonder mountain side
The prickly thorn which grew so deep and wide;
The shallow soil which labour seemed to chide:

The stealthy bird waiting on silent wing,
To catch the grain, the sower's hand doth fling;
To His great mind—such scenes high thoughts did bring.

With tender voice, pure seeds of heavenly love
Were dropped on hearts, by Him who often strove
Through nature's lips man's follies to reprove.

The Church of Christ hath still her wheat and tares,
Her fickle minds scorched up with worldly glares,
Her seed divine destroyed by sinful cares.

We must not separate while on this earth,
Her sons and daughters stained by fallen birth,
Lest we pull up the seed of heavenly worth.

Be ours the aim to scatter goodly wheat,
Resist all foes which tempt our wayward feet,
And make the word of life our daily meat.

Soon will the corn be housed which is outcast,
Soon will our sowing days be gone and passed:
Will angels come to fetch *us* home at last?

Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany.

'And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure.'—1 *John* iii. 3.

THERE was a time when all was pure,
And man was not ashamed to stand
Unclothed amid the works of God,
Like virgin snow upon the land.
We need not linger o'er the fall,
And think how we became defiled,
'Tis ours to rise and call on God,
That we may now be purified.

To be like Christ—restored again,
With bodies pure and spirits bright;
For this we have to strive and pray,
While ling'ring in the shades of nigh
The Son of God came down on earth
To destroy all works of evil;
And give us strength to overcome,
When contending with the devil.

Life is the school for all beyond,
  Where wisdom has to be attained;
That higher life with purer joys,
  By holiness must be regained.
How should the soul if unrenewed,
  Reside where purity abounds;
How shall the heart in love with sin,
  Delight in Heaven and holy sounds!

The lips of that celestial choir,
  Whose voices are a mighty sea,
Have songs as pure as breath of morn.
  And worship for eternity:
Then rise and try by God's own means,
  To purify your life on earth,
Till hallowed deeds of faithful love,
  Make known to all your sacred birth.

Septuagesima Sunday.

'And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.'—*Genesis* i. 31.

WHO shall describe the joy we find,
From walking in a garden fair;
Where beauty reigns on every side,
Making us long to linger there;

Some chosen spot, where stately trees
With flowers arranged by art and skill,
And crystal waters sparkling clear,
Our cup of pleasure seems to fill.

Where every breath which we inhale,
Is laden with fresh perfume sweet;
While the soft grass on which we walk
Is like a carpet to our feet.

What then must be the countless loss
Of that which Adam once possessed,
When every fruit and plant was good,
That with all good he might be blessed.

This day the Church recalls the hour,
When we were clothed in righteousness,
And earth arrayed in robes of light,
Looked like a maid in bridal dress:

When every thing which God had formed
Was clear and bright as mountain streams,
And man himself, as lord of all,
Had thoughts as pure as saintly dreams:

When his sweet lyre was tuned by God,
With every chord most fitly strung,
And not a jarring note was heard
To spoil the hymns in Eden sung.

Then every tree and every plant,
With fruit or flowers was blooming there,
And God Himself was heard to say,
'That everything was good and fair.'

O happy time and happy state,
When no dark cloud had yet been seen,
And mists went up to bless the ground
Which in those days was ever green.

When some great church is sorely marred,
In carvèd work or stately tower;
A builder wise the world invites,
Its ancient beauty to restore.

Should we do less for our great shrine
Whose glory sin hath so defaced,
That when we look upon our hearts,
The form divine is scarcely traced?

As Israel's temple rose in state
Without the noise of workman's art,
Her carvings all prepared at home,
Where labour did her faithful part.*

So must the temple reared within,
Be built by Him who made the whole;
And we ourselves be polished stones,
Wrought by that Hand which formed the soul.

Our Master looks for His own work,
The features of His grace divine,
And where He looks for these in vain,
His Spirit saith—'Ye are not Mine.'

* 1 *Kings* vi. 7.—'The house when it was in building was built of stone, made ready before it was brought thither, so that there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any sound of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.'

Sexagesima Sunday.

'So He drove out the man.'—*Genesis* iii. 24.

TO leave a home by stern decree,
Where we have spent our happiest time,
And seek anew some distant land,
Strangers alike to soil and clime:
This brings a pang to many a heart,
A pang too deep for pride to hide;
Who then shall tell what Adam felt,
Or Eve when standing at his side;

In that dark hour when they retired,
Amid the trees of Eden's shade,
To shun the eye of Him they feared,
Whose *one* command they had betrayed.
That searching cry—'Where art thou hid?'
What cloud hath darkened thy pure face,
Hast thou partook of fruit denied,
And wrought thy downfall and disgrace!

O darkest day on which the sun
With its bright light had ever gazed,
When innocence was led astray,
With sinful arts by Satan laid;
When Eve, the mother of mankind,
Transgressed the law of God's decree,
And first beholding—then beguiled,
Made Adam taste the fatal tree.

In vain each tried to shift the blame,
And lay the sin at other's door,
Instead of owning what they'd done,
And promising to sin no more.
The sky is darkened by their crime,
The curse descends upon the three,
Like a thunder-bolt it fell on all,
And angels watched the sacred tree.

They could not then retrace their steps,
Or make atonement for the past;
From Paradise they are driven out,
And on the world they both are cast.
Dark is the night which has no star
To penetrate the deep abyss;
But darker still that night within
Which has no gleam of future bliss.

As when the sun has set, the moon
Comes forth to shed her welcome light,
So now when they had lost their way,
A star appeared their wrongs to right:
A star which like the dawn of day,
Shone forth from Him the Light of all,
That 'woman's seed should bruise their foe,
And rescue them from Satan's thrall.'

Such was *their* life, and such is *thine*;
Then seek to claim thy birthday right,
The Son of God hath died for thee,
And risen by His wondrous might.
He gives us back what we have lost.
He points us to His wounded side,
Holding aloft the fallen crown,
Which Eden's sin from man did hide.

Quinquagesima Sunday.—I.

'Now abideth' faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity.'—1. *Cor.* xiii. 13.

THERE are some springs far out of sight,
Which seem to have unfailing source,
Onward they speed in trickling rills,
Winding along their narrow course:

And charity is such a spring,
Whose waters never cease to flow;
It rears its homes for every ill,
It sheds its joys on all below:

It comes from heaven the land of peace,
Where every heart with love is fraught;
It elevates each low desire,
And moderates each selfish thought.

Our faith and hope will cease with time,
But 'charity will never fail;'
'Though heaven and earth shall pass away,'
This gift divine will still prevail.

Oh! who can paint Thy likeness true,
The outline of Thy perfect face;
The deeds which Thou dost plan and do,
No mortal hand can ever trace.

Angels may know Thy hidden power,
Who listen to Thy songs above,
And dwell by day and night with God,
In mansions of eternal love.

But we can only now recite
The hymn of love from that bright page,
Which God's own Church this day unfolds,
And will repeat from age to age.

May we O Lord this love now share,
The love which 'thinketh ill of none,'
'Rejoiceth only in the truth,'
And ever 'seeketh not her own.'

Oh! kindle more of this warm light,
And with its rays our souls inspire;
This glory bright which comes from Thee,
This flame of pure immortal fire.

Then shall we learn in realms above,
The love which now 'we know in part,'
And celebrate the 'greatest gift,'
With nobler songs and purer heart.

Quinquagesima Sunday.—II.

'I do set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth.'—*Genesis* ix. 13.

'And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight.'
St. Luke xviii. 42.

LOVE is the theme of praise to-day,
The lesson great we have to teach;
Seen in the rainbow's lofty arch,
Placed high for faith's strong hand to reach;

That emblem of God's love renewed,
When desolation strewed the ground,
And not a sign of life was traced,
Save that bright leaf the dove had found.

Seen also in the beggar blind,
That wandering child of sightless gloom,
Whom Jesus met outside the town,
The world to him a living tomb;

With darkened orbs, which ne'er did see
The light that shone upon his face;
Nor in creation's boundless stores,
Could one bright ray of beauty trace.

This man had cried no doubt in vain
To those who passed along the road;
Before he spake to Him, who proved
To be his Saviour and his God.

Here was the spring of all true love,
Fast running over by his side;
Some news he'd heard of this great love,
And he resolved it should be tried.

They tell him—'Christ is passing by,'
He hears the sound of many feet;
Shall he neglect this golden chance
Which he again may never meet?

'Jesus,' he cries—with earnest voice,
'Thou Son of David, look on me';
I see Thee with the eye of faith,
Oh! make these sightless eyeballs see!'

Forthwith the fount of love poured forth
Its waters pure on that road side
And those dark eyes at once received,
The light which flowed so free and wide.

Some ray of this same light divine,
Must on your hearts and lives now shine;
Some way-side tale of sorrow true
Must still be heard by each of you:
And though you cannot see Christ's face,
Or love in all His features trace;
Yet must you look to Him and say,
'Lighten our darkness, Lord we pray;'
The darkness of the soul within,
Now clouded o'er by inward sin.
If love's great cup seems running o'er,
The cry of faith will fill it more.

Ash Wednesday.

'Rend your heart and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God.'—*Joel* ii. 13.

SOME families receive their ancient name,
From past events, or mighty deeds of fame:
This Lenten day its sacred name doth owe,
To early signs of penitential woe.

Sackcloth and ashes now we do not need,
But prayer and fasting are the fruitful seed
Of holy lives and self-denying love,
By which we tune our hearts for songs above.

Some souls there are who never seem to weep,
Wild oats they sow, and no good fruit they reap;
But such as mark the Church's holy year,
Find seasons there for Christian joy or fear.

Shall husbandmen neglect to till the soil,
Afraid of trouble or of fruitless toil?
No waving crops can they expect to share,
Whose fields lie waste, unblessed by skill or care.

And can we hope to purify the mind,
And reap such fruits as God expects to find;
If we neglect to cultivate by prayer,
The soil within which ripened corn should bear?

This holy day comes round to prove the heart,
And make us think where we from God depart:
It points to Him who wrestled with our foe,
And tells of armour which we need to know.

Help us O Lord to improve this Lenten hour,
To feel Thy presence and adore Thy power:
As we unbend the heart and sin confess,
Receive our prayer, and all our efforts bless.

First Sunday in Lent.

'Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.—*St. Matthew* iv. 7.

WHO shall describe those weary hours,
Spent in the wilderness alone,
When Christ was tempted forty days,
Enduring pangs to us unknown!

Once more we hear the solemn call,
Which bids us on His sufferings gaze,
Deny ourselves, and keep the fast
Demanded by these Lenten days.

As wounded deer so oft resort,
To water brooks their thirst to slake;
And smitten sore retreat from those
Who only seek their lives to take:

So should our stricken souls repair
To Him who sees our guilt within,
Flee from temptation's wily snares,
And seek the stream which flows for sin.

Have we O Lord no thoughts to tell,
No erring words or deeds to mourn,
No earnest cries to lift to Thee
Who bore our trials and our scorn?

By Thy temptation may we learn,
How to contend against our foe,
And while we wage the war with him,
Guide Thou the sword which pierces through:

The sword of Thy resistless might,
Used by Thyself this very day;
That word which drove the tempter back,
And made him feel Thy Godlike sway.

Thou knowest every rising thought,
Which tries the soul that rests on Thee;
Thy blood was shed, that all might learn
The fulness of Thy sympathy.

Assist us now to take our share
In this appointed time of prayer;
To breathe our highest wants to Thee,
With contrite hearts and bended knee:
To wrestle with besetting sin,
And exercise true discipline;
To rise by faith above each care,
And think of griefs which Thou didst bear;
To fight as soldiers of Thy cross,
And 'count all things save Thee as loss.'

Second Sunday in Lent.

'And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy firstborn.'
Genesis xxvii. 19.

HOW easily we glide along the stream,
Where rapid currents drive the boat;
We need not ply the oar or hoist the sail,
While sitting still we onward float.

And yet that river great will have her way:
If we neglect the distant roar
Of her loud cataract's tempestuous waves,
We shall not run our boat ashore.

Such is the treacherous course of all deceit;
It lures the foolish heart of man,
Until it prompts the unseen soul within
To carry out its sinful plan.

To lead astray a neighbour is a sin;
But to deceive a father blind,
An aged man, who could not see his son:
How great the fall of such a mind!

As Jacob stood before his loving sire,
Beguiled by woman's subtle art,
With words of falsehood on his lying tongue,
He played too sure the traitor's part.

What blessing gained he by his heartless trick!
No joy without—no peace within;
His brother's fury drove him from his home,
And made him suffer for his sin.

Rebekah too lost sight of her loved son,
And died before his long return;
For sin and woe like twins walk side by side,
And he who errs is sure to mourn.

And Esau parted with his highest good,
By selling birthright gains for naught;
For not by plaintive words, or bitter tears
Could heaven's first gift again be bought.

Shall we barter now the life eternal
For pottage which this world displays,
And drown our carnal hopes with fruitless tears
When we have erred from righteous ways.

By all these scenes around old Isaac's couch,
Sad voices speak, though long since dead;
May they shed wisdom on our fleeting lives,
And blessings on our dying bed.

Third Sunday in Lent.

'And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man.'—*Genesis* xxxix. 2.

SOMETIMES we hear a fairy tale
Where fortune ever smiles;
And, every week or passing year,
Its hidden blessing piles.

Now Joseph's life might surely read,
Like such a fairy tale,
In any other book than God's,
Where love and truth prevail.

We have the secret of his life,
The key to all success;
He loved his God, and God loved him,
And owned his righteousness.

The avalanche on the lofty hill
When sweeping down its side,
Gains strength by every leap it takes
And force by every stride:

So Joseph's steps extolled his name:
The pit and dungeon hour
Proved ladders to his spotless fame,
And stepping stones to power;

Until he reached the highest round,
And every knee was bent
To him as lord of Egypt's soil,
When famine sore was sent.

The promise sure—that all things help
The man who loves God's name;*
Had never fallen on his ears,
Yet he believed the same.

What lessons great, his life unfolds
To every youthful mind,
Which starting out to run its race,
God's ways shall seek to find.

The Lord was with him where he went,
And he was with his Lord;
His honours rich we may discern,
In all he saw and heard.

Start not alone on life's dark road,
Confiding in yourself:
Look up to God to guide your steps,
So shall you gain His help.

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* *Romans* viii. 28.—'All things work together for good to them that love God.'

The precept is—'Commit thy ways
To Him who rules on high'—
Believe that word and you shall find
Your Lord for ever nigh.

Fourth Sunday in Lent.

'All these things are against me.'—*Genesis* xlii. 36.

HOW oft we fret beneath some load of care
Our anxious thoughts foreshadow here;
Indulge the reasonings of a carnal mind,
Which God's true ways can never find.

To-morrow's trouble may not ever come
To darken our bright peaceful home;
Why should we throw its cloud across our way,
And mar the pleasures of to-day?

Who shall discern the footsteps of our God,
And see the wisdom of His word?
'Tis like the track of ships across the main,
Or eagle's flight to us unseen.

Thus Jacob reasoned with his sons one day,
Pleading to take Benjamin away:
'All these things'—he cried—'are against my life.
Why weary me with bitter strife?

'If bereaved I am of my children's hearts,
If two be lost and one departs;
Then shall ye bring my grey hairs to the grave,
And strip me of the joys I have.'

He little dreamt of all the bliss in store,
The cup of love fast running o'er:
The waggons Joseph sent to fetch him down—
All these to him were then unknown.

'Hadst Thou been here'—two sisters once replied,
'Our brother Lazarus had not died':
They could not read that wise and loving heart,
Which planned for them the better part;

Until Christ's tender voice dispersed the cloud,
Which hung o'er them like some dark shroud;
And gave them back, as earth restores her flowers
That form which cheered their life-long hours.

Thus like these three—our way we often grope
Without the smile of cheerful hope;
Instead of trusting in that faithful Friend,
Who knows each trial He will send.

Seek ye to cast aside all needless fear,
If dark the way—your God is near;
The cloud which shadows you will soon be gone
And light return with daylight's dawn.

Fifth Sunday in Lent.

'And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.'—*Exodus* iii. 3.

WHEN Moses watched the flock at Hebron's feet,
Where solitude and stillness meet,
No sound was heard to break the desert's sleep
Beyond the bleating of his sheep:
His shepherd years on earth were nearly past,
The sun was setting on the last,
And Israel's burden of benighted grief
Found no consoler or relief.

How oft this man had gazed on verdure green
With prickly bush dispersed between;
How many a star looked down upon him there,
When kneeling low to God in prayer:
And now a vision strange with blazing light,
Shines brightly on his wondering sight;
With haste he turns aside and ventures near,
His mind o'ercast with doubt and fear.

He hears a voice in that secluded spot
Which rarely fell to human lot;
'Put off thy shoes'—'this place is holy ground,'
No soilèd dress must here be found:

And then a tale of woe oppressed his ear,
  Which showed that God Himself was near,
Unfolding Israel's groans and bitter cry,
  And all the pangs seen by His eye.

'I am come down'—to prove that I can save,
  And break the chains of Pharaoh's slave;
'I am come down'—to set My people free,
  And thou must go and fight for Me.
Why doubted Moses that strong hand of love,
  Which he had seen that very hour;
Why waited he to see that wondrous sign,
  Which gave to him the rod of power.*

As sterling gold is purified from dross,
  And in the furnace bears no loss;
So God's best gifts by flames are not destroyed,
  In souls which He hath sanctified.
'As many as He loves, He chastens here,'
  To strengthen hope and lessen fear:
Bend down thy neck, if thou the yoke would'st wear,
  And rest assured that love is there.

Draw nigh this day to visit and admire
  The burning Bush lit up with fire:
See how God's Church was crushed, but not disowned,
  Oppressed by man, but not dethroned;
And when on earth you strive with God to meet,
  'Put off thy shoes from off thy feet,'
Hallow the Name on which you seek to call,
  And give the homage due from all.

* Exodus iv. 1—5.

Palm Sunday.

'And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!'—*St. Luke* xix 41, 42.

BRIGHT waving palms with shouts of praise,
Now mark the tribute which men raise,
While greeting Jesus on this day
As if a conqueror on his way.

We hear their shouts—we mark their song;
How sad and loud it rolls along;
As fickle as the morning breeze,
Which flutters in the summer leaves.

They gain at length the mountain steep,
Then pause awhile—and watch Him weep;
What mournful words are on His tongue,
For all the ills which they had done!

'If thou hadst known—e'en thou'—He cries
While tears are falling from His eyes,
'The peace there was for man to win,
Now hid alas! by wilful sin.'

'How oft would I beneath My wings
Have sheltered Israel from their sins;
If only they had owned My power
And known their visitation hour.'

Onward they make for Sion's hill,
Descending slow towards the rill,
Which girt the valley just below,
Where olive trees were seen to grow.

No heed is paid to His sad voice;
They all with one accord rejoice,
As if there were no sins to tell,
No God to fear, no Heaven or Hell.

One only song did He admire,
The voices of the youthful choir,
Which in the temple did resound
Telling of joys which they had found.

Oh! contrast great beyond all word,
Between this First Day with their Lord,
And those *He* saw when looking on,
So deeply lined with pain and scorn.

What should we learn from this gay scene,
With garments gay and branches green,
From shouts of joy which rent the air,
But could not ease the load He bare.

Learn we to shun that vain applause,
Which comes and goes without true cause,
To court God's praise—not that of man,
In all we strive to do or plan.

Then shall we wave ere long *our* palm,
Taste in our woes God's healing balm,
And join that multitude above,
Whose songs are always songs of love.

Monday before Easter.

'Let no fruit grow on thee henceforth for ever, and presently the fig-tree withered away.'.....'And He went into the temple and cast out them that sold and bought.'
St. Matthew xxi 19. 12.

THE week of suffering rolls along,
Which pressed so hard on God's dear Son;
The peaceful home on mountain side,
Where He so oft His griefs did hide,
Is now exchanged for bitter hate,
And friendless homes within the gate
Where stood the Temple's gleaming towers,
Too soon to look on weary hours.

Our Lord's disciples on this morn,
With anxious thoughts and hearts forlorn,
Were walking slowly by His side,
At the first dawn of Passion-tide;
Beside the road a tree was seen
With lack of fruit mid fig-leaves green;
To which He spake a withering word,
And made it witness for its Lord.

And there it stands for every age
Which ponders o'er the sacred page;
Nothing but fruit, we hear it say
Will bear the test of God's great day—
Shall we now spend each fleeting year
Without one anxious thought or fear,
And be content while memory weaves
A fruitless life with nought but leaves?

Or when e'en now with silent thought
We tread the temple where men bought,
And hear it called 'a House of Prayer,'
A home for God's own worshipper;
Shall we forget that stern rebuke
Those greedy sellers could not brook,
And as we tread the sacred court
Find nothing there to be cast out?

No unclean lust or worldly care
Which we have left to linger there,
No thought of pride or vain conceit
Wrapt up with prayer of self-deceit—
Be with us Lord this holy week
To bless each day we meet to keep;
And make the heart defiled by sin,
Like temple courts when cleansed within.

Tuesday before Easter.

'And in the morning as they passed by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots.'—*St. Mark* xi. 20.

'Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.' *St. Mark* xiii. 2.

ONE more calm night had passed away
In that loved home at Bethany:
The moon which shone with silver light
And twinkling stars with lustre bright,
Had sunk to rest this Tuesday morn,
Beneath the light of early dawn;
When He Who is the world's true Son
Had now His onward path begun—
Again His holy steps are bent
Toward the city, where He spent
So many days and hours when here,
Teaching the truths we now revere.
By parable and mystic word
Too soon alas to be performed,
He bade them watch and always pray,
Before their years had passed away.

Then sitting on the mountain side,
Where garden shades were soon to hide
The drops which rained from off His brow
Through untold pain and bitter woe;
He cried—'Behold yon temple there
With mighty stones and buildings fair;'
Its glory soon will pass away,
Though men see not that awful day:
And pointing to Jerusalem's fall,
He spake a tender word to all,
About that last and dreadful hour
When He returns with mighty power:
To give to man his just reward
And make the lost confess their Lord.

Wednesday before Easter.

'And Judas went his way and communed with the chief priests and captains how he might betray Him unto them.'
St. Luke xxii. 4.

WHAT peaceful calm steals o'er the land,
When overhead some gathering cloud
Freighted with mist or heavy shower,
Is waiting to discharge its load:

There's not a whisp'ring leaf then heard;
For silence reigns across the plain,
Until the storm comes sweeping down
With lightning flash and heavy rain.

Thus silent plottings marked this day,
And faces stern were seen together,
As weary hours passed slowly on;
Like threatening clouds in stormy weather.

'Twas spent by Christ in that loved home
Where He so often found a rest,
Or 'mid the shelter of that grove,
Which looked upon His troubled breast:

We catch no sound of pleading voice:
He seeks in solitude and prayer
To leave behind the sullen crowd,
And cast on God His load of care.

The traitor now is with the foe,
Intent upon his greedy gain;
Beguiled by that besetting sin,
Through which so many souls are slain.

We do not thus betray our Lord:
But we may often traitors prove,
By shameless deeds and broken vows,
Through lack of faith or want of love.

By all the pangs of this sad day,
By all its treachery and woe,
Uphold our faith in Thee, O Lord,
That we may show our love is true.

Thursday before Easter.

'And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.' . . . 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful.'
St. Matthew xxvi. 30, 38.

WHILE gazing on some distant scene
Outstretching far away,
We sometimes know not where to pause
And let our eyelids stay:

And now there crowd upon the thoughts
Which follow in Christ's way,
So many acts by day and night,
To ponder and survey.

The Paschal Lamb and holy feast,
The washing of the feet,
By which He sought to teach His own,
What acts were right and meet.

And then that Eucharistic hymn,
Before they leave the room,
And walk together slowly forth,
As if to face their doom.

We watch them passing down the hill;
  We listen to their song,
Till Olivet conceals the path
  On which they move along.

The moon is shining on their road,
  The stars are looking on,
The favoured three fall fast asleep,
  While Jesus kneeleth down.

Oh! agony by Christ sustained
  For every soul we see;
When He the cup of sorrow drained
  To make us ever free.

Those olive trees with darkened shade,
  What saw they on that night,
When all our guilt was laid on Him
  Who is the world's true Light!

They saw that kiss the torch revealed;
  Disciples in their fears;
And Jesus pleading for their lives
  Forgetful of His tears:

Stern soldiers too with glittering spears,
  Abashed before *His* eyes,
Who yields to them His precious life
  As from the ground they rise.

Oh! by the mystery of Thy love,
  By all Thou didst endure,
Lead us to feel our debt to Thee,
  And love Thee more and more.

Good Friday.

'He was wounded for our trangressions, He was bruised for our iniquities . . . and with His stripes we are healed.'
Isaiah viii. 5.

O THOU the Paschal Lamb of this great week,
The Prince of Peace so patient and so meek,
Thy grace and mercy we draw nigh to seek;
Was ever love like Thine?

Thy crown of thorns, Thy piercèd hands and side,
Thy bleeding form which rebels now deride,
Thy words while looking on the surging tide;
Was ever love like Thine?

Well might the sun her noonday glare withold,
Weeping o'er griefs her light could not unfold,
Hiding the shame for which Thy life was sold;
Was ever love like Thine?

Redeemed by Thee at such a costly price!
Can we forget Thy wondrous sacrifice?
Refuse to bow the knee, and shun all vice;
Was ever love like Thine?

Ye passers by! Ye sons with heart and mind,
To earth so quick—to heaven's best gifts so blind,
He died—that you in Him all joys might find;
Was ever love like Thine?

We're not our own, the ransom-price was paid,
When on Thy cross our debt of sin was laid;
Why should we stand aloof, or be dismayed,
When such free love was Thine!

'Take up thy cross on earth,' we hear Thee say,
And go where I thy Master, lead the way:
Look not behind, but spend for Me each day;
Then shall My love be thine!

We're told how once a friend who stood hard by,
Beheld a maiden sold with pitying eye,
Then paid a willing price, though it was high;
A ray of love divine:

How she with love did wait on her new lord,
Seeking to know his will, and do his word;
Her cry—'Let my redeemer's voice be heard!'
Should not such love be mine?

Oh! day of love! whose love hath ne'er been told,
Beyond all price of silver or of gold:
By word and type earth saw Thee long foretold;
But knew no love like Thine.

Help us O Lord to see Thy cross each day,
And on that cross our every hope to stay;
To consecrate ourselves to Thee, and say
Was ever love like Thine?

Easter Even.

And when Joseph had taken the body . . . . he laid it in his own new tomb.'—*St. Matthew* xxvii. 59, 60.

THAT loving form we watched this week,
To-day we see no more;
Calmly He sleeps within the tomb,
His pains and sorrows o'er.

No costly trappings marked His death,
Few bore Him to His grave;
The world passed on its heedless way,
Though it He died to save.

While looking back, we see it all,
As it was long foretold;
The rich man's tomb wherein He lay,
And how His life was sold;

The grain of wheat laid in the ground,
Great harvest to ensure;
The prophet cast into the deep,
Then thrown upon the shore;

The bleeding side on which men looked,
  Pierced but left unbroken ;
With every type and every word
  Fulfilled as He had spoken :

And best of all, we see in Christ
  The lost on land and deep;
Resting awhile until He comes,
  To wake them out of sleep.

Like Him we have both light and shade
  The waving palm of gladness;
A Calvary of woe and pain,
  An Easter eve of sadness.

We know not what may come to pass,
  While ling'ring on the way—
May we, O Lord, in every grief,
  Our hope upon Thee stay.

Like him, who at the Holy Feast,
  Reclined upon Thy breast;
True emblem of that perfect love,
  Which finds in Thee its rest.

Easter Day.—I.

'Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.'—1 *Corinthians* xv. 20.

O HAPPY morn, which comes to cheer life's way;
With holy greetings love salutes this day,
Not as careless souls which ever tarry,
But as those dear friends who sought Thee early.

Their treasure hid outside the city wall,
Their unseen Jesus was their unseen all,
And with His kindly word He soon repaid
The love which while it watched was sore afraid.

Three holy women on this Easter morn,
Before their city smiled in early dawn,
Were hastening to the tomb with eager feet
To anoint their loving Lord with spices sweet.

We cannot thus anoint His sacred head,
But we may go where'er true love shall lead;
Adorn His house with offerings rich and rare,
His presence worship, and His praise declare.

True faith will rise to greet this holy day,
And at His altar her fond tribute lay;
Will visit now the tomb where He had lain,
Where Mary wept, and wept so long in vain.

He sleeps no longer now—He's left the grave,
He rose this day to conquer and to save:
The watch have fled—the heavy stone is gone,
'Christ is risen!'—be this our Easter song.

As flowers in spring rise from the sleeping earth,
And mark their wintry graves with Easter birth;
So should we now in frequent thought arise,
Above those earthly cares which veil our eyes.

Too long we sometimes linger o'er the spot
Where loving friends lie hid but not forgot;
Too long we sometimes shed the silent tear,
Forgetting that the spirit rests not there.

This Easter morn comes back to silence fear,
To make us know and feel that Christ is near,
To tell how death was conquered by His love,
That souls redeem'd might reign with Him above.

To cheer the mourner as he stoops to weep,
Beside the grave where some loved form doth sleep;
To shed its sunlight rays on all around,
And brighten flowers just laid on hallowed ground.

While gathering in Thy house of prayer, dear Lord,
To chant Thy praise or hear Thine own pure word;
May every faithful soul be filled by Thee,
With visions bright of immortality.

When at Thine altar too we meekly fall,
And tell to Thee the sins our souls enthral;
May we discern e'en there Thy heavenly face,
And follow on our way refreshed by grace.

Thus may we learn aright Thy Easter song,
Of victory gained, and life's hard battle won,
Be owned by Thee in that triumphant day,
Which when it dawns will never pass away.

Easter Day.—II.

'Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.'—*St. John* xi. 11.

THE lips are sealed, the tongue is mute,
We fail to catch a single note,
Save those few words which Jesus spoke,
'Our brother Lazarus only sleepeth!'

For three long days, he calmly slept
Within that tomb securely kept,
Which seemed to mock the tears men wept,
And those strange words, 'He only sleepeth:'

Those weary days were slow in passing,
To sisters waiting for Christ's coming;
Yet e'en then, He was fulfilling
His own kind words, 'He only sleepeth.'

We see it all as we draw near
To gaze upon the silent bier,
Or watch in thought the falling tear,
Which could not say—'He only sleepeth.'

That piercing cry which Jesus raised,
'Come forth'—once more behold the day,
'Loose him and let him go' his way,
The dead in Me are only sleeping:'

It rent the tomb, it clave the sky,
It wiped the tear from every eye,
It showed to all that life was nigh,
And how in death we're only sleeping.

Be this our Easter song to-day,
Be this the truth we bear away,
Be this our life, our hope, our stay,
'Our brother Lazarus only sleepeth.'

Monday in Easter Week.

'Behold two of His disciples went that same day to a village called Emmaus . . . . and Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them.'—*St. Luke* xxiv. 13, 15.

HOW sweet are those companionships,
Where souls are knit together,
And hopes and fears are all as one,
Which death alone can sever:
Where Jesus is the faithful friend
Whose Name each lays to heart;
Content to do His holy will,
And choose the better part,

Such were the friends whom Jesus joined
Walking to a village near;
Their thoughts perplexed with tidings sad,
Which awakened anxious fear:
With burning hearts they heard Him dwell
On the old prophetic scroll;
Then they prayed Him, 'not to leave them,'
For His words becalmed their soul.

'Abide with us—the daylight fades,
Shadows dark are creeping on;
Come in and rest, and tell us more
Of the news but just begun'—
He tarried there to make them know
He was in truth their Saviour!
Then left them both to talk and muse
Upon His kindly favour.

Have you such friends to cheer your path?
One in hope and steadfast faith,
One with your risen Lord in life,
Fearing only what *He* saith.
Such friendships here uphold the soul,
As years roll on they ripen;
And when our days are nearly flown,
The cares of age will lighten.

Be this our daily cry while here—
'Come O Lord and with us dwell';
The night of sin o'erspreads our path,
Passing shadows who can tell:
We do not ask for *one* brief stay,
But to have Thee ever near,
To cheer our homes and drive away
Every sinful doubt and fear.

Tuesday in Easter Week.

'Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.'—*St. Luke* xxiv. 36.

SOMETIMES to waves upon the sea,
Sometimes to souls o'erwhelmed with woe,
We catch those words of kindly love,
Which breathed their peace on all below.

Sweet is this gift come when it may;
But sweeter far when we're distressed,
And know not how to calm our fears
Is this great boon which brings its rest.

With fastened doors and trembling hearts,
The apostles met within a room,
To worship Him Whom they believed,
Was still enshrined in Joseph's tomb.

When suddenly with breathless awe,
They gaze on One they scarcely knew;
Until He showed His hands and side,
And gave to each a nearer view.

Then glowed their hearts with fervent joy,
  Each face a token of delight,
When once again His word of peace
  Rolled back their ling'ring shades of fright.

If winds and waves were in His grasp
  To toss or cradle at His will,
Then surely He can calm the soul
  Which turns to Him in every ill.

The world may beat upon our head,
  And line with care the furrowed brow;
But still in Him there is true peace,
  If only we will seek it now.

First Sunday after Easter.

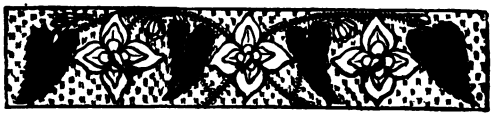
'The same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.'
St. John xx. 19.

'TIS sad to be at strife with man,
To know there's anger in the heart,
To see the brow o'ercast with clouds
When quarrels sore have done their part—
But not to know the peace of God
'Whose smile is heaven—whose frown is hell';
The bitter fruits of *such* a loss
No mortal tongue can ever tell.

On Easter Day when Christ arose
Before the breaking of the dawn;
Dark thoughts oppressed some loving hearts
Like evening shadows stealing on:
Jesus Himself—'The Prince of Peace!'
Through bolted doors to these drew near,
And with true peace upon His tongue,
He silenced every doubt and fear.

How often now we forfeit peace
  By closing doors against our Lord;
And lose the comfort of His light,
  When we should rest upon His word.
Would'st thou enjoy the gift of peace,
  The peace which earth can never bring,
The peace which Christ alone can send;
  Give Him thine heart, and let Him in!

He comes to drive away despair,
  He bends to earth His listening ear,
He is our Advocate with God;
  Why close the gate when He is near?
Peace with our conscience we should seek,
  Peace with our neighbour we must make;
But peace with God through His dear Son,
  On this great peace—our all's at stake.



Second Sunday after Easter.

'I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.'—*St. John* x. 11.

THE shepherd watching day and night
His snowy flock laid down to sleep,
Or browsing in some valley deep,
Where dangers great beset their lives;

Then starting up to meet their wants,
And seek afresh some pastures green,
Near yonder stream which may be seen
Winding its course across the plain:

The sheep responding to his call,
And moving on with silent tread
Behind the steps which now do lead:
How oft have painters drawn this scene!

'My sheep'—saith Christ—'do hear My voice
And follow Me' in life's rough way;
They listen to the words I say,
And 'none shall pluck them from My hand.'

False shepherds flee before the foe,
  Like hirelings set to guard a fold,
  They care for nothing but the gold—
'*My life* I give to save the flock.'

Shall we be His while on this earth;
  'Lie down in pastures' green and fair,
  And be restored from wand'rings drear?
Then His strong hand must be our guide.

This Shepherd's care can never fail;
  He sees the foe which longs to slay,
  And gives the word which guards our way:
He ever lives—He cannot die.

He marks the sigh in every breast,
  And wipes the tear-drop from each eye:
  Go where we may, He still is nigh,
And when He folds—who then can stray?

Third Sunday after Easter.

'And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. . . . . and the angel of the Lord stood in the way for an adversary against him.'—*Numbers* xxii. 21, 22.

WHO has not watched the wary rod,
Outstretched across a peaceful lake,
And seen the fish beguiled by art
Give up its life for lucre's sake:
Or the foolish moth fast fluttering round
The light which tempted it too near,
Until the flame had caught its wing,
And made it sell its life so dear.

Such is the way fools are ensnared,
By some deceit which lures the soul;
Then gliding down their chosen path,
They lose at length all self-control.
'Twas thus with Balaam and his life,
He fell a prey to money's power,
Until the light which filled his mind,
Was quenched by lust in danger's hour,

Sad is the story of his fall;
Sad are the words we hear him say,
But sadder still to think he longed
To die as we are wont to pray; *
Then fell at last in battle sore
Fighting with foes by Israel slain,
Instead of keeping on *their* side
Who fought for God in Moab's plain.

The ass forbade the prophet's rage,
The angel showed him what to do;
Yet still he dallied with his snare
And sought two ways at once to go.
But God and mammon as one friend,
We cannot ever truly serve;
We must decide and fix the heart,
Or we like him shall surely swerve.

We may have light and know God's laws,
We may kneel down and sometimes pray;
We may do much to please the world,
But left to self, we have no stay.
There was great zeal in Balaam's life,
He saw the path to him made known,
But lust of wealth beguiled his heart
And by its snare he was o'erthrown.

* *Numbers* xxiii. 10.—'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!

He had desires which sounded well;
  He wished to reach God's home at last;
And yet he perished through deceit,
  Like trees struck down by lightning's blast.
Oh! who can read his wavering life,
  Which tells us of his golden bait;
And not uplift the heart in prayer
  That he may shun what God doth hate!

Fourth Sunday after Easter.

'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.'
St. James i. 17.

THE sky is clear, the night is calm,
We raise our eyes above,
And gaze upon the moon's soft light,
With stars like gems of love.

There reigns the 'Father of all lights,'
Upholding every world:
We look again, and every look,
Shows wonders still unfurled.

We are the creatures of His word,
His first fruits here below;
We need His gifts to bless our years,
With joys we do not know.

'Our wills unruly,' He must rule,
They are so prone to stray;
Our souls cleave sadly to the dust,
While on their upward way.

O Thou who guidest every orb
And planet in their flight;
Look down on us Thy children weak,
And fill us with Thy light.

All changes here except Thyself,
With Whom there is no change,
New faces come and pass away
And much to us is strange.

Fix Thou our hearts on 'those true joys.'
Revealèd in Thy word,
Where all is sure and freely given,
'Through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

Fifth Sunday after Easter.

'Verily, verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you.'
St. John xvi. 23.

THERE are some hills too high to scale,
On their great peaks no foot can stand,
The traveller looks on them with awe,
And thinks of God's Almighty hand:
And there are rivers on this earth,
Whose waters flow so strong and fast,
That none can estimate their power,
Or stay the stream which rushes past.

And prayer is like these works divine,
We cannot realise its force,
Or comprehend its priceless gains,
And what we forfeit by its loss;
But we can read of bygone deeds,
Of battles fought and victories won,
Of sick restored and chains unloosed,
And all the wonders it hath done.

Was not the ladder reared on high
  Which Jacob in his dream discerned,
With angels moving up and down,
  A vision true of what we've learned!
'Tis thus we seek by upward steps,
  To reach that One we cannot see,
Till dwelling in eternal light,
  We with His angels bend the knee.

Yes! we have promises from God
  To lead us upward to His throne;
With words so loving and so clear
  That we may claim them as our own.
He bids us ask that we may have,
  And knock aloud at mercy's gate;
Why should we linger in the porch
  When we are bidden not to wait. *

The rod which Moses often used;
  The incense from the altar fire;
The cloud which veiled the mercy seat,
  True thoughts of prayer may all inspire.
Faith has no limit to her cries,
  Save that which God himself may send,
And we can safely leave with Him
  What gifts He deems it best to lend.

* *Isaiah* lv. 6.—'Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near.'

Then let us rise on upward wings
And cleave the arch above our eyes,
Who shall recite the unseen gains,
We may call down from yonder skies?
Yes! gains not only for ourselves,
But for the hearts which need our prayer,
That wand'ring spirits far removed,
May reap those fruits, which all can share.

Ascension Day.—I.

'This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.'—*Acts* i. 11.

THIS day we see our Saviour rise
To mansions bright beyond the skies;
Disciples marked His upward flight,
And strove to gain one farewell sight.

We like to linger on the strand,
And watch the vessel leave the land,
Which bears afar o'er wave and tide,
The friend so lately by our side,

But though our hearts within us burn,
We cannot tell when he'll return,
Or whether we on earth shall meet
That one we loved so well to greet:

On this high Feast we have no fear,
No room for anxious gaze or tear;
Christ comes again—His angels say,
'As ye have seen Him go this day.'

We cannot now behold His face,
Yet with our spirits we may trace
That likeness drawn by His own hand,
For every tribe and every land.

Thrice bless'd are they who have their part
In all the treasures of His heart;
Who now with Him ascend on high,
By upward thoughts and steadfast cry.

Such in His glory bright will share,
When with His saints He shall appear;
Receive from Him a crown of life,
And bid farewell to mortal strife.

Oh! grant us Lord Thine unseen power
To pierce the heavy clouds which lower
In Thine Ascension take our part,
And rise to Thee with earnest heart.

Too much we drag upon the ground,
Too fond we cling to all around;
Heaven is our home—may we ascend,
And life eternal with Thee spend.

Ascension Day.—II.

'Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in.
Psalm xxiv. 7.

'LIFT up your heads, ye everlasting gates,
And let the King of glory in'—
His earthly toil and pains are over now,
He cometh home to live and reign!
Who shall recount the victories He hath won,
The trophies He hath left behind;
The foes o'ercome, the sorrows which He healed
Both of the body and the mind!
Who shall define the limits of His sway
O'er every tribe and nation here;
Who the horizon of that kingdom span,
Unseen by eye, unknown to ear!

Hail mighty Conqueror!—returning home
To receive the welcome of all heaven,
Laden with spoils won on dark Calvary's hill,
Where Thy blest life for us was given.

While lingering in the wilderness of time,
  Far distant from our promised rest,
May we in Thee O Lord survey our home,
  And in Thy great Ascension trust;
Lift up our heads, and rise when we're depressed,
  Above the clouds which veil our sight;
In Thine Ascension realise our own,
  And with that hope beguile the night.

Sunday after Ascension Day.

'And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me.'—*Acts* i. 4.

WE often have to wait in faith,
Like ships becalmed upon the main;
Sometimes for hours which seem too long,
Till hope is led to smile again.

Such was the posture of Christ's Church
When He ascended up to heaven;
She had to wait for His great gift,
Until the Spirit's aid was given.

We see the eleven filled with joy
By tidings which the angel brought,
They leave the mount, for well they know
Where now Christ's presence must be sought.

They meet within an upper room,
One in their faith and steadfast aim,
Waiting in prayer, and full of hope
For that blest Comforter they claim.

Oh! picture bright of infant days,
When schism had not rent in twain
That bond of unity and love,
Which linked so close that fair domain.

We need this Comforter divine,
To be our leader and our Guest,
To calm the waves which rage without,
And still the passions of our breast:

To lift us up to that abode,
Where 'Jesus Christ is gone before,'
While we are left awhile below,
On wings of faith alone to soar.

And we must wait for this same gift,
Which Pentecost so freely gave:
It may not come with equal power,
But still its blessings we may crave.

Wait—is the watchword of our Lord,
Wait—is the language of His Church:
Wait for those gifts you cannot see,
Hope's deepest treasures need much search.

Yes! wait on promises received,
Wait till He comes again with power:
Wait as good servants for their lord,
Soon shall you hail His advent hour.

Whit Sunday.—I.

'I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever.'
St. John xiv. 16.

O THOU Who at creation's birth,
Wast brooding o'er the waters wide;
When God the Father spake to earth,
And darkness reigned on every side:

Who once again in Jordan's stream
Assumed the form of mystic Dove,
When Jesus was the sacred theme
Of Him, who is the God of love.

Thy gifts of old we dare not crave,
Thy tongues of fire and healing art,
Which made the Church so strong to save—
But all we need Thou wilt impart.

Shall we not learn from Nature's smile,
And all the wealth she now outpours;
To cast aside our anxious fear,
And draw sweet comfort from her stores.

Her lap in these bright hours of spring,
We see outspread with many charms;
And as we look upon her face,
She seems to speak of unseen arms.

If parents heed their children's wants,
And listen to their tender cry,
Will God our Father fail to give,
When for His Spirit we draw nigh?

Our love is but a feeble ray,
Flick'ring in this our night of sin;
Yet many waters cannot stay
That flame which He hath lit within.

Who then shall know the love of God,
The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:
How free, how vast beyond all word
That love revealed by countless cost.

As ships are calmed upon the deep,
When breezes cease to swell their sail,
So on our course we cannot keep,
If Thy blest Spirit's breath shall fail.

O Holy Ghost, be Thou our Guide
While sailing for the boundless shore;
If tossed with waves or heaving tide,
Be with us then and evermore.

Whit Sunday.—II.

'The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost.'
St. John xiv. 26.

O HOLY GHOST the Comforter!
While sailing on life's swelling sea,
Where can we anchor our frail bark
Unless our hope is hid in Thee.
There is no rest for sons of toil
Who will not 'take the easy yoke,'
But turn away from Him, whose voice
Of Thy blest comfort often spoke.

O Holy Ghost the Comforter!
We greatly need Thy presence here,
Where tempests try the struggling soul,
Rocked to and fro with many a fear:
Come breathe Thy peace upon our minds
And calm the storms which sweep around
Thou art the Guest for earth-bound hearts
To lift them up above the ground.

O Holy Ghost the Comforter!
Come down to us on this high Feast,
When Thou didst bless the early Church
With gifts her foes could not resist:
Come down we pray with mighty help,
To bear us o'er each swelling wave;
And prompt our souls to do God's will,
That we may know Thy power to save.

Monday in Whitsun Week.

'I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.'
Acts x. 34.

FOR ages long God had one chosen race
To whom he gave His written law;
Fencing them in, like some choice garden fair,
With gifts which others never saw:
But when Christ came to save a world from sin,
He overthrew this outer wall,
Destroyed the veil the High Priest passed within,
And held out mercy free to all.

In deepest lines this plain truth is written,
That God respects no chosen class;
Bright children gay with blooming cheeks of health,
By palace gates are seen to pass.
The cottage at the foot of yonder hill
Abounds with gifts of love untold;
And merry peals of laughter echo there,
Telling of joys unbought by gold.

The inner chamber of true bliss below,
  Is sweet contentment's lowly seat;
And Jesus Christ confers His promised peace
  On those who kneel at wisdom's feet.
His gates of gold are opened wide for all
  On the high road to wealth within;
They're only closed by Him on wilful foes
  Who still pursue the path of sin.

Tuesday in Whitsun Week.

'Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.'—*Acts* viii. 17.

SOME days on earth leave footprints clear behind,
Too deep for long years to efface;
As we look back, they seem to come again
Like features of a well-known face.

Such are the days to which fond memory turns,
Arraying them in colours bright;
Recalling bridal vows and lives betrothed
To kindred hearts by holy plight.

Days which bring back to some the solemn hour,
When praying for the life divine
They were ordained as ministers of Christ,
With charity and truth to shine.

Days which lead others back to that still aisle,
  Where they knelt down to seal the vow
Which pledged them to renounce all worldly foes,
  In words which cling to memory now.

Such hours the early converts once beheld,
  When sacred hands on them were laid
By rulers sent to strengthen their new life,
  And give to them the Spirit's aid.

'Tis wise to keep the birthday of such deeds,
  And treasure up the sacred past;
To consecrate anew ourselves to God,
  So long as fleeting years shall last.

Awake my soul—Recall to mind thy vows;
  Seal them afresh like letters new;
Walk worthy of thy holy calling here,
  And with true prayer the past review.

Trinity Sunday.—I.

'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.'—*Revelation* iv. 8.

THERE'S a story told of the Emerald Isle,
Where crimes have stained e'en nature's peaceful smile:
How a saint once preached upon the mystery
Of the Three in One, and the One in Three,
To listening crowds who gathered round his word
To learn their way to heaven and to God.

He held aloft—'tis said—a trefoil flower,
And cried—'Here is the mystery of the hour,
These leaves are three, but all unite in one,'
As light and heat and fire make up the sun,
As body, life and soul complete the man;
Or rainbow hues define the rainbow span.

If angels cast their crowns before God's throne,
And worship Him they cannot see, but own;

Why should we stumble at the solemn thought
Of One, whose attributes can ne'er be taught—
The stars above look down and chide our shame,
Their glory or their number—who can name?

The mighty ocean too with teeming host;
The winds which blow with music loud or soft;
All these proclaim with one united hymn,
How great is God, and how all live in Him!
'Tis vain to reason then—we ne'er can scan
The Trinity of God or Trinity of man.

Oh! help us Lord as children to adore
Thy mystery of love and life and power:
To rise on wings of faith above the sky,
Content to own, what we can ne'er descry;
To join on earth the bright angelic host,
And worship Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Trinity Sunday.—II.

'One God and Father of all.'—*Ephesians* iv. 6.

O TRINITY of love and power!
On Whom we lean in life's dark hour,
Uniting in one holy tie
That grace which brings the Godhead nigh:
To Thee our hearts this day we raise,
With saints and angels offering praise.

Thou art the Father, whom we own
Dwelling in light around the throne;
Thou art the Son—we have access
Through Thee in times of sore distress;
Thou art the Spirit, by whose aid
Our sins beneath the Cross are laid.

How shall we prove that we are true
In all we now confess or do,
And seal that creed we oft repeat
While looking toward Thy mercy seat:
Oh! make our life on earth to be
A witness for Thy Trinity!

First Sunday after Trinity.

'There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus.'
St. Luke xvi. 19, 20.

IF we had lived in yonder Eastern town
Where Lazarus lay in rags upon the ground;
Beheld the dogs which licked his bleeding sores,
And in the rich man's house our table found:

Our mind and judgment might have been misled,
While looking on the great man's earthly state;
And dazzled by the good things which we saw
Have overlooked the beggar at his gate.

Thus must we err, who fail to read the heart
And look upon the outer man alone;
But God who knoweth all, discerned true wealth,
And claimed this weary sufferer for His own:

Ere long he died—and died we're told the first,
The first to be with Abram and the blest;
The first to leave his sorrows far behind,
And mingle with the spirits now at rest.

The rich man died—was carried to his tomb
With signs of funeral pomp and worldly state;
No angel sent by God brought him sweet rest,
Though while he lived *men thought* that he was great.

Thus like some hidden pearl in ocean's bed,
Or gold beyond the ken of mortal eye;
True wealth is sometimes clad in humble dress,
When watched by Him who all our thoughts doth spy.

How great the contrast between these two lives,
By Dives spent in idle ease and pleasure,
Heedless of all who toiled outside his gate,
Each day to him a round of wasted leisure:

By Lazarus spent in poverty and woe;
Cast roughly down by neighbours on the road,*
To catch some crumbs of mercy from a man,
Whose father Abraham believed in God.

'Twas not the lowly rag or purple robe,
That made them look so different to the Lord,
But that true faith unseen to human eyes,
Which brought to one the riches of God's word.

* 'Which was laid'—literally 'was cast,' as if an unwelcome burden.

What are the many things which we have here,
If spent on self, unmindful of the poor;
They bring down sorrow on the owner's head,
And prove far worse than any running sore.

Seek ye that gold which never can decay,
Or tempt your wayward heart from God to stray:
If you would stand in that triumphant day
When Heaven with earth and sea shall pass away.

Second Sunday after Trinity.

'A certain man made a great supper, and bade many.'
St. Luke xiv. 16.

WHEN some great lord a feast prepares,
With many dainties rich and rare;
Sends invitations freely round
Arranging all with thoughtful care:

We seldom hear of much delay,
Or guests unwilling to partake
Of all the generous host provides,
For those who at his table eat.

Yet on this day the Church records
A feast which few would deign to share,
And servants urging all around
To come and take the princely fare.

The chief inside the city walls
Were bidden first to enter in;
But they declined with one consent,
Indifferent to the host within;

One pleads his business, or his farm,
  Another has his house to mind;
And so by pleasure or by gain
  They lose the joys which all might find.

Then wider still the message ran,
  To all the poor who thronged the street
Perchance they may regard the call,
  And for the feast be found more meet.

And last of all, outside the gate,
  Where weary wanderers might be found,
The messengers are told to go
  And urge on them the welcome sound.

Thus pressing was the king's command
  Conveyed by prophets long before,
To those who shunned e'en then His word,
  And trampled under foot His law.

Why should we turn away from Him,
  Who rules on earth as King of kings;
Why forfeit heaven for worldly gains
  And spurn the bounty which He brings?

The feast is spread before our eyes,
  Tis laden well with choicest wine;
The cup we're asked to come and drink
  Is filled with juices from 'The Vine!'

And there is room—yes room for thee,
  If only thou wilt haste to go,
And share the blessings which He gives,
  Before thy sun hath sunk too low.

Come now, He cries, for all is found,
  Come quick, for life itself is short;
Come young and old, with little child,
  And take the gifts so freely bought.

The banquet is outspread for all,
  The room is filling for the feast;
The gate of love stands open wide,
  Pass in, pass in, and be His guest.

Third Sunday after Trinity.

'Likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.'—*St. Luke* xv. 7.

WE speak of heaven as far away,
And think we cannot hear
One note of those angelic strains,
Which may be floating near:

Like children in the outer porch
Of some great minster aisle,
We may discern the distant choir,
And catch its songs awhile.

When brother fond or sister dear
Beguiled by power of ill,
With broken heart and downcast loo
Returns across the hill,

Led by the Shepherd of their souls
From wand'rings on the plain,
Back to the flock they left behind,
No more to stray again:

As they lament their former deeds,
And tread anew God's way,
Lay down the burden of their sins,
And o'er the past do pray:

Faith's ear may catch the joyous notes
Of heaven's bright golden lyre,
Swept by those hands of love and power,
Which we can never tire.

How near those angels seem to be
While listening in their home,
With hearts of joy and sympathy
Like Him whose love they own.

How blest the song too which they raise,
When He Who is 'The Way,'
In his safe arms is seen to bear
The sheep which went astray.

Have their glad harps been swept o'er you,
In their unseen domain;
Or watch they now a wandering soul,
For which to raise no strain?

Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

'For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.'
Romans viii. 22, and
1 *Samuel* xii. 16–25.

WHILE gazing on a lovely spot
Not often trod by human feet,
Away from crowded homes and smoke
And all the din of noisy street:
Some calm retreat of light and shade,
Where torrent streams and mountains high
With woodland slopes and varied hues,
Make wearied souls forget to sigh;
Where every sight and every sound
Gives pleasure to the human mind;
From soaring larks to murm'ring brooks,
Such joys as scarce can be defined.

'Tis hard to think creation groans,
When we are charmed with new delight;
Yet wearied limbs and failing strength,
Soon greet the welcome shades of night;
While sin within and care without,
Break in upon the fairest day
With weary sighs, and grievous ills,
Which cannot join in Nature's lay

And when we muse on some we've lost,
Who lately drank the cup of pain,
And paid that penalty of sin,
Which like the night returns again;
We see the earth in travail still,
And taught by Eden's heavy fall
We cast aside fair beauty's spell,
Convinced that sorrow comes to all.

Be this our aim in life's rough way,
Be this the end of every pain,
To make us seek our rest in Him,
Who for our sins and woes was slain:
Then trials long will seem but short
As we survey our heavenly home;
And with the heart upheld by hope,
We shall not wish from God to roam.

'Twas thus that Samuel spake of old,
When Israel wandered from their God;
He promised grace and certain help,
If they would only keep His word:
The heavy rain and thunder loud,
Sent to remind them of their sin;
It led them to confess their shame,
And made them own their lawful king.

Why should we mourn o'er life's short ills,
Forgetful of that wisdom sure,
Which when it mixed our cup of woe,
Sought in that cup our griefs to cure;
The thorn and thistle at our feet,
The barren soil which needs much care,
The life of toil wherein we groan,
With erring hearts their blessings share.

Let all the signs of fallen power,
  And all the loss which we've sustained,
Lead us to look beyond this hour
  When higher joys shall be regained;
Regained by Him who came to seek
  A lost and ruined race on earth;
And by His blood and spotless life,
  Restored to us our rightful birth.

Fifth Sunday after Trinity.—I.

'It repenteth Me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following Me, and hath not performed My commandments.'—1 *Samuel* xv. 11.

WE often mar a duty plain
Which meets us on our daily round;
The thought of gain or praise of man,
Creeps in and lures us with its sound;
Like some fair sketch which art hath wrought
With patience long and many toils,
Until a child comes in the room
And with its brush the picture spoils.

'Twas thus with Saul when he was sent
To slay God's foes and give no rest;
He thought of gain which he might make
And kept back part for his own feast:
The sheep and oxen which were good,
The lambs and fatlings of the fold;
All these he spared and kept alive,
With jewels great and gifts of gold.

Only the refuse did he slay,
The lean and worthless of their kind;
Reserving for himself the spoil,
To satisfy his greedy mind.
How subtle is the downward path;
'Tis like the worm that gnaws the root
Of some green tree which promised fair,
Destroying all its hope of fruit.

Saul tried to hide his grievous sin,
By pleading that he did God's will;
And sought to make the prophet think,
That there was nothing lacking still:
He spake of people and their wants,
To prove that *he* was not to blame;
While bleating sheep and lowing herds
Proclaimed aloud his open shame.

'The offerings great the Lord did need
Upon the altar and the fire;
They thought of them'—he vainly urged
When they fulfilled their own desire.
We cannot hide the truth from Him,
Whose eyes are found in every part;
Man's finite mind we may deceive;
God sees the chamber of the heart.

'To do is more than sacrifice,
To hearken than the fat of sheep,'
And he who would be owned of God,
In his true paths must ever keep.
Twas sad to hear the prophet tell
Of tidings dark about his end;
That he should lose his earthly crown,
Because he had despised God's word.

Far sadder still to be cast off
  Because that word we oft forgot;
To hear Christ say, when time is past,
  'Depart from me, I knew you not.'
Strive then to walk in duty's path,
  Unsnared by lust or money's art;
And if the way appears too hard,
  Be this your prayer—'Enlarge my heart.'

Fifth Sunday after Trinity.—II.

'Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net.'—*St. Luke* v. 5.

HOW varied were the spots where Jesus spake
To those who sought to hear Him teach;
The busy town or dreary wilderness,
The mountain side or sunny beach.

We see Him now in Simon's fishing boat
Pushed off the shore where many stood;
Scattering the seed of His eternal truth,
That all might profit if they would.

That eager fisherman could not foresee
The great reward for him in store,
When he so willingly gave up his boat,
To serve the Lord whom we adore.

'Tis thus we gain far more than we can tell,
When we give back what we possess;
And often lose what on ourselves we spend,
Our highest treasures growing less.

'Launch out into the deep'—we hear Him say,
Regardless of thy bygone toil;
And as the net was cast at His command,
'Twas laden with a wondrous spoil.

Well might the fisher tremble at the haul,
When he had spent a fruitless night,
And overcome by all which he beheld,
Recoil before so strange a sight.

We often strive whom God hath set to teach,
Not on the lake which sleeps at rest;
But on life's rolling sea, where heaving waves
And stormy winds disturb the breast.

We drop our net sometimes in waters calm,
And think our work is all in vain;
Then launch we out far onward in the deep,
And boldly cast our net again.

What should we learn by all this anxious care,
In weary hours passed on the lake,
By fishermen who knew so well their craft,
Yet on that night no fish could take?

Learn we to watch for souls with stronger faith
In Him who rules o'er land and sea:
The boat we launch in life at His command,
Is laden for eternity.

Sixth Sunday after Trinity.

'Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided.'

2 *Samuel* i. 23.

MANY tablets to the unseen dead are raised,
With verses written on their fame,
Extolling loud their matchless deeds and words,
To keep alive their mortal name.
Here is a song from David's loving heart,
A song of praise on friend and foe;
For Saul and Jonathan are slain,
Pierced by the sword, or archer's bow.

No record dark is told of all the wounds
Which Saul inflicted on his son,
Both are described as 'lovely in their lives,'
And 'in their deaths as being one':
For love outspreads her veil o'er many faults,
And charity forbears to tell
Of all the erring acts which marred the life,
Now crushed beneath the final spell.

But praise is given to that unchanging friend,
'Whose love exceeded that of women';
The love which cheered so often David's soul,
When like 'a partridge he was driven.' *
'How are the mighty fallen,' is his cry,
'Put on your robes and weep for Saul,
Ye mountains and ye fields refuse to have
The dew or rain which comes for all.' †

The shield of the mighty rests now on thee,
The royal blood defiles thy plain;
'Tell it not in Gath'—tell it not abroad,
Lest heathen hear about thy slain:
Like lions strong or eagles soaring high
With rapid flight above the ground
They were in life—and now we mourn their death,
With loving words of plaintive sound.

Who does not prize the friendship of true love,
That pure love which none can sever,
The same in welcome joy, or heavy woe,
Remaining with us now and ever.
Such was the love of David's faithful friend,
As constant as the light of day,
Cemented by that unity of faith,
Which makes us one in all we say.

* 1 *Samuel* xxvi 20.—'The king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.'

† 2 *Samuel* i. 19–23.

As Eastern maidens went to Jacob's well,
To fill their pitchers to the brim;
So ask your God to pour that love on you
Which flows like mountain springs from Him—
May friends like Jonathan be seen with you,
One in their steadfast walk and creed;
One in their living hope and daily aim,
One both to strengthen and to lead.

Seventh Sunday after Trinity.

'I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with Me three days, and have nothing to eat.'
St. Mark viii. 2.

THE sun is lowering in the sky;
Dark shadows soon will gather round
That hungry crowd afar from home,
But nigh to One whom they had found.
The wilderness looks bare and drear,
No waving crops are smiling there,
No friendly homes or towns are near;
Well might their wants awaken fear—
One only Refuge, Christ was near.

Scant was the fare which they possessed,
Who trembled for the fainting host;
'Seven loaves and some small fishes too,'
Was all the food which they could boast.
They saw no bread within their reach,
To feed the multitude with food;
They'd scarce enough to meet their wants,
And therefore stood in doubtful mood—
One only Refuge, Christ was near.

Some souls perchance were seeking meat
To satisfy their higher need,
And listening to the Word of Life,
With joy received the precious seed:
His boundless pity yearned for those,
Far more than ever they for Him;
And if we 'seek God's kingdom first'
His choicest blessings we shall win;
For Christ our Refuge still is near.

Look at the crowd now sitting down,
Their canopy the sky of heaven,
Their seat the barren desert plain,
Their food the bread by Jesus given:
And as you listen to those thanks
Addressed to God upon His throne;
Seek by like words to raise your heart,
To Him whose gifts we are to own—
For Christ our Refuge still is near.

Who shall describe the joys we find
From feeding on that heavenly meat,
Which Jesus Christ hath left behind
For weary souls on earth to eat.
Oh! gather up in baskets now
Some fragments of His many words;
Then shall you share that higher feast,
Where He is owned as 'Lord of lords,'
And know the Refuge we have there!

Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

'Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.'

St. Matt. vii. 17. and
1 *Chron.* xxix. 9–29.

WE'RE taught in God's most holy word,
To study nature's lovely face,
And in the riches of her stores,
Fit emblems of our lives to trace.

The faded leaf in autumn's fall,
The ripened corn with golden ears,
The sickle in the reaper's hand,
Returning with revolving years:

The fruitful tree by yonder stream,
Or fruitless branch with only leaves,
Whose nature vile no good can yield—
True wisdom here her garland weaves.

Our Master watches every plant,
Which He has dressed to bring forth fruit,
And if He looks for it in vain,
His axe is laid upon the root.

'Tis willing offerings which He loves,
Not fragments only of our store,
Wrung from the heart by fear of man,
Or hoarded up till life is o'er.

Offerings like those we see this day,
Prepared by David and God's tribe;
To build a temple of rare worth,
For love of God, and not for bribe.

'Tis vain to give for worldly fame,
And sound aloud our trumpet's blast,
By paltry deeds which flatter self,
And leave the soul a wreck at last.

True works of faith laid out for God,
Like cornfields ripened by His sun,
Leave goodly sheaves behind, to show
What toil and care for them hath done.

Would'st thou be own'd when Christ appears,
As one whose life was rightly spent;
Be this thy creed—Whate'er I have
Is not mine own, but only lent!

Ninth Sunday after Trinity.

'Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.'—*St. Luke* xvi. 2, and 1 *Kings* x. 1–14.

WHATE'ER we have, we are but stewards,
Stewards of the silver or the gold,
Stewards of the life which God hath given
And all the treasures which we hold.
Too shrewd are we with earthly gains,
Which for a while we have to spend;
Too slow to give for what is good,
To quick to waste, too slack to lend:
Unmindful of the warning word,
'Thou mayest be no longer steward.'

Yet this is Time's increasing cry,
Which every knell proclaimeth near,
And it will come alike to all
Who use or waste their goods while here:
Our talents may be great or small,
The widow's mite or acres broad,
The lowly cot or mansion great,
Which holds the peasant or the lord:
Yet must we hear the solemn word,
'Thou mayest be no longer steward.'

The unjust steward devised a scheme,
When by his lord he was oppressed,
To have enough when all was lost,
And find a home in his distress:
Child of the light—Christ bids you learn
Some lessons wise from this man's ways,
And shew more wisdom than the world,
In forming plans for future days.
Oh! why should you forget His word,
'Thou mayest be no longer steward.'

If Sheba's queen from distant lands,
A journey took some grains to glean
Of higher knowledge from a king,
Regardless of the toils between:
Should we do less who know that King,
Which God's great love to us hath given;
The Fountain of all truth and gain,
Whose finger points direct to heaven?
Oh! keep us mindful of Thy word,
'Thou mayest be no longer steward.'

Make you good friends of Mammon's wealth,
Sure friends to greet in time to come,
Who on your head will blessings pour,
When you have reached their peaceful home:
Then will your Lord remember you
As stewards of that true wealth He gives;
And when your years have ceased to roll,
He'll welcome you where He now lives,
As those who ne'er forgot His word,
'Thou mayest be no longer steward.'

Tenth Sunday after Trinity.

'And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it.'—*St. Luke* xix. 41.

TEARS flow apace in this dark world,
Like dewdrops on the thirsty soil,
Watering anew the weary road
Where tread the daily sons of toil;
Yet rarely in the surging crowd
Is seen that deeper grief within,
Which wrung from Christ a flood of tears
While dwelling on Jerusalem's sin:
Oh! are there not, though lightly borne,
Like sins within our hearts to mourn?

The Psalmist's eyes 'ran down with tears' *
Like torrent streams on some hill side,
Which he recalled that broken law
When men e'en now so oft deride:

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* *Psalm* cxix. 136.—'Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not Thy law.'

And Peter shed most bitter tears
When he beheld his Saviour's look,
And thought of those foreboding words
Which his crushed spirit could not brook.
Oh! have not we some tears to shed
O'er deeds misdone and words we've said!

Shall Jesus weep o'er human sin,
While thinking on the woes it brought,
And shall we *never* mourn with Him,
Who as He wept, our healing sought:
Or when we see the Temple cleansed,
To be a house for holy prayer;
Shall we allow within our hearts
Dark thoughts we know He cannot bear:
Oh! lead us all to look within,
And cleanse *our temple* from all sin!

That noble city with its towers
Gleaming beneath the midday sun,
Some would have gazed upon with pride,
Forgetful of the ills she had done!
But His clear eye beheld the storm,
Which marr'd the beauty others saw,
And while the tears were streaming down,
He spake of days with cruel war:
Oh! keep us all from Israel's scorn,
And from those sins, which made Thee mourn!

We cannot count those sacred drops,
Which furrowed down Thy visage meek;
We only see the signs of love,
Too deep for mortal tongue to speak!

Oh! let Thy tears plead with those souls,
Where words perchance have lost their power;
For tears will move e'en hardened hearts,
Oh! let them speak to such this hour!
They fell from Thee for wilful sin,
Shall *they* no tribute to Thee bring?

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.

'Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.'—*St. Luke* xviii. 10.

O THOU before Whose mighty throne,
Angelic hosts are wont to bend;
Eternal source of heavenly light,
Wilt Thou to mortal prayer attend?
Attend to hear the lowly cry
Which penitence breathes out to Thee;
And mark the first uprising call,
Or holy tear, which Thou canst see.

Yes! Thou hast said, that we must ask
Before we enter by Thy door,
And urged to pray by Wisdom's voice
We dare not cease, till life is o'er.
Why should we doubt Thine own sure word
Why seek we not that spirit true,
Which lifts its voice above the crowd,
And mingles with the faithful few?

That child-like and confiding faith,
  Which in Jerusalem's temple court,
Relied on God and not on man,
  And gained from Him the grace it sought.
His was the mirror of true prayer,
  His was the hope which soared above,
Until it reached the throne of grace,
  And was enriched by God's great love.

The golden ears hang down their heads
  And fruits bend lowly on the tree,
When summer hours have made them ripe;
  All teaching us humility!
That smitten breast and lowly cry
  In yonder temple we must heed;
And with like words draw nigh to God,
  To find the mercy which we need.

Do what we may, we have no claim,
  No works of charity to plead,
No tithe or fasting days to urge,
  Like him who praised his every deed.
Short was that cry the sinner raised,
  Deep was the guilt which he confessed,
But like all prayer which trusts in God,
  It brought to him the promised rest.

Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.

'And looking up to heaven, He sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.'—*St. Mark* vii. 34.

OH! who can gaze on that sad form,
Where loss of speech or stammering tongue
Babble aloud with gestures wild;
And not lament what sin hath done.

Such was the man borne on the road
By friends who in his loss did share;
And as Christ looked upon his face,
He heaved a sigh which all could hear.

Oh! why that sigh from One so great
Who came to heal the dumb and blind;
To open eyes that could not see,
And pour new light upon the mind.

He sighed, because He felt for him
As feels a mother for her son;
He sighed, because He knew so well
What evil deeds the Fall had done.

That city which His claims refused,
  Those sisters whom He so much prized,
That garden where He drained the cup;
  All these beheld His earthly sighs.

Aside He takes him from the crowd,
  That when apart from worldly din,
He might discern the touch of life,
  And own the power which came from Him.

Aside He takes His children now,
  That they may muse on their sick bed,
Upon the kindly deeds He wrought,
  And all the loving words He said.

Great was the awe which fell on those,
  Who heard the strange mysterious cry
Addressed by Christ to him He touched—
  It seemed as hidden as His sigh;

And yet it woke that slumbering ear,
  Which could not hear a single sound,
And made the deaf man straightway tell
  In accents clear, the joy he'd found.

We need this prayer to us fulfilled—
  It loosed at once that inner gate,
Which nature's chains so long had barred,
  For him who could not clearly speak.

There are mute tongues for Christ to loose,
  There are dumb hearts which will not wake,
And ears still sealed by unbelief,
  With fetters strong *we* cannot break.

If Thou O Lord hast made us free,
  From bonds by which we once were chained,
Preserve our lives from sinful ways,
  Till perfect freedom we have gained.

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity.

'Would God my lord were with the prophet, that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.'
2 *Kings* v. 3 and
St. Luke x. 33.

LIKE some dark cloud which hides the sun,
And dims the fulness of its rays;
Our varied trials seem to chide
The vanity of earthly days.

'Twas thus with Naaman of old,
Whose valiant arm had often met
His warlike foes in battles fierce,
With courage brave and prowess great.

But one stern foe he could not slay,
That leprosy he had to bear,
It haunted him by day and night,
And weighed him down with anxious care.

And yet there was an unseen hand,
Directing then 'a captive slave'
To turn her thoughts towards that home,
Where he Elisha's aid might crave.

She told her mistress of his power,
The mighty cures wrought by his word,
And bade her go and seek to learn
What he would do for her dear lord.

'With chariots strong and horses fleet,
He might be driven on the road
And see the prophet for himself,
Within the walls of his abode.'

Though young, she did a neighbour's part,
Like him who rode along the way,
Where the poor traveller with his wounds,
Half killed by thieves was seen to lay.

She might have thought upon her wrongs,
And dwelt upon her captive hour,
When Naaman plucked her from her home,
Snatched like a rosebud from the briar.

But she forgot that bitter day,
And all the ills it could relate;
Intent to soothe the grief she saw—
Her soul devoid of cruel hate.

Thus should we all with love unfold
God's healing gifts to young and old;
Bind up the running sores of life,
By pouring oil on waves of strife;
Forget our sorrow and our self
In giving to the needy help;
Lift up the weary from the ground,
And tell of One whom we have found.
Then will the Lord our works repay
And shine upon us day by day.

Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity.

'Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?'
St. Luke xvii. 17.

HAS only one come back to tell,
Of blessings I have freely poured;
Have all the rest departed home,
Forgetful of My healing word?
They all in trouble to Me cried,
And shared alike My saving power;
I bade them go and be absolved,
And they were cleansed that very hour:
Oh! where are now the nine?

Thus spake the Lord of heaven and earth
To him who worshipped 'at His feet,'
And offered up his heartfelt thanks,
Such thanks as for his cure were meet—
Must not these words of wounded grief
Be heard e'en now in realms above,
From Jesus looking on this world
To see some trophies of His love,
Oh! where are now the nine?

The mercies which His hand bestows,
Like falling drops upon the soil,
Are more in number than our hairs,
And help to cheer our daily toil.
The blessed rays of His own light
Which to our souls so fully come,
With all the gifts of rolling years,
Oh! who shall count the mighty sum
Poured down upon the nine!

The thankless ones who walked away,
Belonged to Abram's chosen seed;
And had received the law of God,
With all those rites of which we read:
Oh! where shall gratitude be seen,
If favoured souls pursue their round,
With silent tongues and thankless hearts,
Heedless of mercies they've received—
Disciples of the nine!

Thy Church O Lord is our safe guide,
Thine ark to bear us o'er the sea:
Signed with Thy cross—blest with her creed,
Should not her sons give praise to Thee?
Can *we* be silent for Thy gifts,
When hills and valleys clap their hands;
When forest trees their branches wave,
And all the fruits which crown the year
Rebuke the thankless nine!

Oh! never, never be it said,
That you who claim to be Christ's sheep;
Who feed upon His pastures rich,
And His wise precepts feign to keep;

Who see the blood outpoured for souls
On that dark cross where He was slain;
Oh! never, never be it said
Of you who have so much to gain,
Oh! where are now the nine?

Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity.

'But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.'
St. Matt. vi. 33.

WHO has not seen the little child,
With busy fingers on the shore,
Building its castle with much care,
Although the tide will sweep it o'er:
Or chasing a butterfly with zeal
Across the hill or flowery vale,
Until it's held and caught at last,
When beauty droops and colours fail.

Such is the way men often toil
To raise some castle on life's plain;
And when it's raised and fairly built,
'Tis seen to melt away again;
To melt like snow before the sun,
By loss of health or hand of death;
To lose its beauty and its charms,
As the moth just caught upon the heath.

Oh! how we need to hear Christ's voice
Preaching to us those lessons true,
About the mammon some adore,
And the true Master all should know.
We live in God, and yet we fail
To lean on His Almighty power,
Casting away eternal gains,
For fleeting baubles of the hour.

The birds which wing their rapid flight,
And come again each new-born year,
Led by the will which He hath given
Steer their safe course o'er waters drear;
And those which never leave our shore
To winter far in other lands,
Are fed at home from day to day,
Without the aid of human hands:

'*They* never gather into barns,'
Or seek to hoard up yearly store,
And yet they rarely die of want,
Their daily cup keeps running o'er:
The flowers too preach on every side
With lovely tints and varied hue;
Surpassing all which man can paint,
Or fuller's art can ever show.

By these our Master bids us strive
To guard against to-morrow's care,
Casting each burden at His feet,
That we may rise above all fear.
Why should we seek the lesser gifts,
And leave the greater far behind,
When flowers below, and birds on high,
Rebuke each day our faithless mind?

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity.

'Behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow.'
St. Luke vii. 12

'TWAS early in the spring tide
When nature wore her garments new,
And Nain's slopes were clothed with flowers,
Such flowers as only spring can show:

That Jesus met a funeral train,
With measured steps upon its way
To lay a brother in his grave,
To wait the resurrection day.

'Twas not a tale of common loss
Which overtook this house of woe;
The dead man was an only son,
The mourner was a widow too.

Long was the train which slowly moved
Outside the gate where Jesus paused,
For many felt for this sad death,
And knew the blank which it had caused.

His eyes were fixed on one dark form,
The mother in her early grief,
With tears fast falling on the ground,
And yet obtaining no relief.

Her sorrow moved His tender love,
And stirred the feelings of His soul;
For hers were tears which none could check
Like mountain rills without control.

She saw not Him who gazed on her
And came to cheer her on the way;
One thought absorbed that stricken heart,
'I 've lost my only son and stay.'

'Weep not'—He said—with kindly voice,
'Thy loss is not beyond My power;
Look up to Me the mourner's friend,
There's joy for thee this very hour.'

The bearers stopped without delay
As He drew near and touched the bier;
His words of life awakened awe,
No lack of reverence trace we there.

We lose sometimes God's highest gifts,
By want of faith and holy mien,
Forgetting that the Lord is nigh,
Although His presence be unseen.

Few words spake Christ—but as He cried
'Young man, I say to thee, arise;'
The widow's son awoke to life,
And looked around with wondering eyes.

Oh! joy beyond all words to tell,
When that hushed voice was heard to speak;
And looking on her risen son
The mother kissed his pallid cheek.

We must not say it was a chance
This meeting with the silent bier;
Christ saw it all from first to last,
As He with wearied steps drew near.

O Thou who hast the key of death,
And gave to us our living breath;
Be Thou as nigh when we are borne
By loving hands to our last home;
And whisper words of cheering sound,
When we are laid beneath the ground;
Then lost to sight, we shall not part
From friends now one with us in heart;
But rise again with them to shine
In glory bright—for ever Thine!

Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.

'Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.—*St. Luke* xiv. 11.

THERE is a gate through which all pass,
As pilgrims for the better land:
And He who holds the key of life,
Unlocks this gate with His own hand.

'Tis not the golden gate of power,
Of fortune great or kindred tie:
Pride enters not the lowly porch,
Where kneeleth true humility,

It is the grace our Lord portrayed
By little children on this earth;
And he who would discern its charms,
Must learn from Him its priceless worth.

It chooses not the upper seat
Where wealth or fame may act their part;
It is content to walk aside,
Its dwelling place the lowly heart.

It courteth not the world's applause,
Whose smiles and frowns disturb it not;
It only seeks to be like Him,
Whose humble life is much forgot.

Its reaps its own reward while here,
And feeds on pastures green and fair;
Unlike the restless heart of pride,
Which no true peace can ever share.

Oh! who can tell when life is done
And our great future has begun,
The weight of glory kept in store,
For those who trod the lowly floor
Of penitence and child-like will,
By valley deep or rugged hill;
Content to be with their dear Lord
Confiding only in His word:
Such humble souls like jewels bright,
Shall shine with more than common light,
For Christ reserves His glory great
For those who choose the lowest seat.

Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.

'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'

St. Matthew xxii. 37, 38, 39.

AS varied rays make up the light
Which gilds our path from day to day;
Painting the flowers we see around,
Colouring each tender leaf and spray:
So love to God and love to man
Completes the law we should fulfil;
And he who needs true love to God,
Must ever fail to do His will.

Such was the answer Jesus gave
To one who asked about the law,
But lacked clear knowledge of that word
Of which he seemed to stand in awe.

Love comes from God the fountain head,
Like waters gushing from a rock,
And works for Him whose voice declares—
'Behold I stand without and knock.'

It rolls along its crystal stream,
And o'er the brink of time it leaps;
But even then it does not pause
Until the 'sea of glass' it meets.

Oh! who can tell thy mighty power,
Or count the treasures by thee lent:
Thou art the spring of all delight
Where weary hours are gladly spent.
Like that blest pool on Sion's hill,
Where sick and needy did betake
To bathe their sorrows and their wounds,
And leave behind each weary ache.
Thy welcome face doth ever shed
New beams of gladness on the heart;
A ray of light from God Himself,
His very smile in truth thou art.

O love divine! with outstretched arms
So bountiful and yet so free;
How can we hope thy depths to sound,
Which even angels cannot see!

High spots there are in distant lands,
Which mortal feet have never trod;
Ice-bound for ever by that hand,
Which is the hand of our great God;
And thou art like some mountain peak
Concealed by clouds in yonder sky;
Bidding the traveller be content
With upward looks to feast his eye;

And wait in patience for the hour,
When sunny rays shall chase the cloud,
Now overhanging for a while
The distant scene like some dark shroud.

And God's great love will ere long give
Far brighter visions to the soul;
As when the mist forsakes the hill,
A clearer light reveals the whole,
And lovely tints of varied hue
Lend new-born charms to everything,
Until the sun withdraws his rays,
And night unfolds her sable wing.

We know not yet 'what we shall be'; *
We only know that Christ will come
To give us bodies like His own;
And take us back to His loved home,
To see our King, just 'as He is,'
Arrayed in robes of perfect light;
No longer hid by earth-born clouds,
But manifested to our sight.

Oh! let us pray that our cold hearts
May glow with fervent love while here;
The love which suffered for our sake,
'The love which casteth out all fear'—
Then shall we walk along the path
Marked out by love from day to day;
Led by her hand—cheered by her smile—
Until we are called to 'pass away.'

* 1 *John* iii. 2.—'It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.'

Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

'And, behold, they [brought to Him a man sick of the palsy.'—*St. Matt.* ix. 2. and *St. Mark.* ii. 1–12.

TO bring some helpless one to Christ
Who cannot come alone,
And lay him down before His feet,
Is work which He will own.
And if we find the way is barred,
By cares which press too near,
Or by a crowd of lookers-on,
And yet we persevere:

Then we may learn from wonders wrought
So freely by His hand,
How surely He will hear our cry,
In this far distant land.
The palsied man let down by friends
With trouble and with care,
Received a cure for all the sins
Which he was known to bear.

And then to make His foes believe
The power He had o'er guilt,
Christ bade the man arise and walk
And prove what he had felt.
Oh! blest reward for all their toil
Their patience and their love,
To save a soul from sin's dark curse
By mercy from above.

True faith *must climb*, if it would reach
Above the noisy crowd;
Her anchor cast within the veil
Above the passing cloud.
Thy life on earth may never tell
To those who look on thee,
A tale of sorrow or distress—
But God will surely see.

Have you no friendless one to help
In soul or body tried;
No brother fond or sister dear,
Now dwelling at thy side?
Then rise and seek to let them down,
By cords of prayer and thought,
Before the throne of His great love,
Where help may still be sought.

Twentieth Sunday after Trinity.

'Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.'
St. Matthew xxii. 12.

A ROYAL feast with marriage fare
Outspread with dainties free;
The king's arrival in the room
His different guests to see:
The wedding robes so fair and white,
Provided for them all;
And yet one guest in mean attire
Within the banquet hall.

His silent look, and speechless tongue
Which could not say a word,
To hide the shame which weighed him down
When questioned by his lord;
The sentence passed—to bind him there,
And take him far away—
Far from the hall of light and joy
Without a single plea.

How oft we 've heard the story read
In God's own house this day ;
Forgetful of the lesson taught,
And gone our homeward way.
Will you be robed who now are led
To worship at Christ's feet,
In that last hour when all shall stand
Before His Judgment seat ?

' Tis not the garb of outward life,
Displayed before mankind,
' Tis more than this—'tis something white,
Too pure for earth to find !
' Tis royal too, not human dress,
Such as this world doth weave ;
The best that's made—a perfect dress
With nothing to retrieve.

The feast is heaven begun on earth ;
The robe is Christ's alone,
Woven by Him upon the cross,
Where He our victory won.
By faith we put this garment on,
And all which it imparts ;
The righteousness which God demands
To clothe our sinful hearts.

Oh ! wear it now and hide thy shame ;
There's nought for thee to pay,
Except the love which all give back
Who think they've heard Christ say—
' Arise and walk with sins forgiven
Along the narrow way,
Until you reach the banquet hall
Where shines the endless day ! '

Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity.—I.

'If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace.'—*Daniel* iii. 17.

WHILE gazing at the golden god
Erected high on Dura's plain,
Our hearts will follow three young men
Who looked on it with bold disdain:
And yet perchance our wills may stray
From those unerring laws they owned,
Though we refuse to bow the knee
And worship gods of wood or stone.

Oh! hearken ye to their brave words,
Who listening to the king's decree,
Stood undismayed like some high rock,
Lashed by the fury of the sea;
'Our God we serve'—in Him we trust,
Deliverance He will surely bring:
If not—we rest upon His word,
Beneath the shelter of His wing!

Look at them now by fetters bound,
And cast into a burning lake;
On them the fire has no control,
Their very hairs no hurt can take.
What form divine is with them there,
To stay the heat and rising flame?
Some angel bright like God's own Son;
Some being great of unknown name!

In duty's path go boldly on,
Fearless of all which man can do,
Then angels still will hover round
In danger's hour to shelter you.
The forest tree when rocked by winds,
Strikes deeper root beneath the ground;
Oh! let your faith when tempests sweep,
More rooted in God's word be found.

Once more look back upon those men
Unmoved amid the burning sea;
As now they stand before their king,
How strangely sounds his new decree!—
'Let every nation far and near
Henceforward honour Shadrach's God,
And he who speaks against His name,
Let him be slaughtered by the sword.'

Thus did salvation set her seal,
On one whose pity nought could move,
And led his hardened soul to bend
Before the God of truth and love.

When passing 'through the waters' drear, *
Or by the furnace sorely tried;
God promises to be with us,
If we in Him our hopes confide.

The eagle when she has soared on high,
Beyond the reach of all below;
Looks downward with a fearless eye,
Upon the plain where lurks her foe:
And when we rise on upward wings
Above the fear which proves a snare; †
We can be still, and know that peace,
Which unbelief doth never share.

Be this your constant aim in life,
To cast on God your load of care;
And calmly tread 'the narrow path,'
Upheld by faith and earnest prayer;
Then will He guide your daily steps,
And make you firm in danger's hour;
Bestow the wisdom which you need,
And be to you a mighty tower!

* *Isaiah* xliii 2.—'When thou passest through the waters; I will be with thee . . . . when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.'

† *Proverbs* xxix. 25.—'The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.'

Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity.—II.

'Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth.'
St. John iv. 50.

AS early rays of rosy morn
Roll back the shadows of the night,
Gild snowy peaks and peaceful lakes
With varied hues of glowing light:

So Jesus Christ the world's true Light,
Lit up the earth with brightest rays
Of gentle love and healing power,
When in our midst He passed His days.

The blind and lame, the young and old,
The sick and sad with careworn face;
All came to Him to seek their cure,
And found His love and saving grace.

Here comes a father for a son,
Whose taper looked well-nigh burnt out;
He had *some* faith within his heart,
And yet he seemed to ask in doubt:

Come down O Lord and heal my son,
  This very hour before he die;
Come Thou and stand beside his bed'—
  Such was the tenor of his cry.

That feverish look of sore distress;
  That throbbing pulse which beat so fast;
That death-like shadow on his face,
  All these declared—he's sinking fast.

So thought the father as he stood
  Before the Lord of life and power;
He little knew, how could he tell,
  What Christ might do that very hour.

One word sufficed—'Thy son shall live';
  With peaceful heart hushed now to rest,
The father heard his servants say,
  'The fever's gone—thy son is blessed.'

Nor was this all the father gained,
  True love her conquest there achieved!
For all within his house were led
  To worship Him they now believed.

Leave all your wants with Him who said,
  'Why ask for signs of power and might?
He knows your inmost thoughts and fears,
  And chides the dullness of your sight.

His arm upholds the day and night;
  Oh! rest on Him and not on self;
He's near to bless you on life's road,
  And give to you His saving help.

Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity.—I.

'Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions.'—*Daniel* vi. 16.

HOW bright the light which shines on us
From Daniel as our guide;
No fear of man did he betray,
No shame had he to hide:

The lions' den he firmly braved
Regardless of the king;
His firm resolve—'I'll serve my God,'
Whatever it may bring.

Three times he 'kneeled upon his knees,'
And prayed as he was wont,
With windows opened to the light,
True emblem of the saint.

Like some high cliff where frowning rocks
Look down on angry waves,
Which beat against their granite base,
Amid the storm which raves:

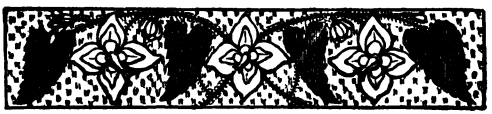
He stood unmoved by all the seas
Which raged around his soul,
Believing in that God who saves,
Where man has no control.

The king when he had sealed his fate,
Obtained no rest that night;
Sweet sleep the friend of weary hearts
Brought him no calm delight.

With early morn he rose in haste
To visit Daniel's lair;
Rejoicing greatly when he found,
An angel had been there:

There to restrain the angry lions,
And save the prophet's life;
To crush the plans of wicked men,
Who stirred up waves of strife.

Oh! vision bright of God's great love,
To cheer the heart which looks above;
All mouths Thou surely now wilt close,
Which seek Thy wisdom to oppose;
And they who suffer for Thy name,
Shall shine as stars of brightest fame.



Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity.—II.

'Then came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?'—*St. Matthew* xviii. 21.

HOW oft shall I free pardon give,
Seven times or even more?
So reasoned one who followed Christ,
And thought upon His law.

If he had known full well the prayer,
'Forgive as we forgive,'
He surely would have understood,
How we are taught to live.

Too prone we are to hover round
Blind reason's artful net,
Until we're tangled in the maze,
Which by her hand is set.

Like foolish birds caught in a snare
By artful trappers made,
Who venture near to pick the grain,
Which for their lives was laid.

Reason and faith have different fields
  Outspread before the eye;
And faith receives what reason fails
  In hidden ways to spy.

The debt of sin we cannot scale,
  Like Alpine peaks of boundless snow,
Beyond the reach of mortal feet,
  It is too high for us to know.

And God will not His pardon give,
  If we deal hardly with a foe;
Who need to have unmeasured grace
  From Him who seeth what we owe.

Stretch out at once the hand of peace,
  By right o'ercome thy brother's wrong;
So shall your soul be void of hate
  And charity renew her song.

The droppings of the smallest spring,
  Will tell upon the hardest stone;
And kindly words of gentle sound,
  Will move the heart which they condone.

Thrice happy he who like a child,
  Receives this truth in simple love,
Content to do his Father's will,
  Waiting to learn yet more above.

Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity.

'Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's.'
St. Matthew xxii. 21.

'RENDER to God the things of God,
And pay ye tribute to the king';
So spake the Lord to Pharisees,
Who bitter questions sought to bring.
The image on the Roman coin,
Supplied an answer to their pride;
And they who trusted in themselves,
Now sought in vain their shame to hide.

Hast thou no image fair to read,
Stamped on thyself by God's decree;
No righteous laws on earth to learn,
Which He expects observed by thee:
No life-long talents lent for use,
No golden hours to interlace
With faculties employed for Him,
Whose works around reflect His face?

What are the dowries of the mind,
Its reasoning powers, and judgment strong;
But gifts from God to His dear sons,
Which to His service should belong.
Then give ye back without delay,
The trophies due to your high King;
On your fair brow His cross was signed,
To His own feet your tribute bring.

Christ still inquires for His pure gold, *
And plies the question asked of old:
What image true doth this coin bear,
Whose superscription trace we here?
What signs of power by Adam lost,
Restored to souls through countless cost?
Some answer sure He will receive,
From hearts which in Himself believe:
But if His likeness be effaced,
And trampled down and sore disgraced;
Then shall we hear our King proclaim
To listening worlds our life of shame.

* *Revelation* iii. 18.—'I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire.'

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity.—I.

'She said within herself, if I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole.'—*St. Matthew* ix. 21.

THERE is a crowd upon that road,
Where Jesus Christ is seen to go;
On every side men touch His dress,
But all His virtue do not know.
One timid soul pressed on her way,
More thoughtful than the moving throng,
Resolved by faith to seek a cure,
Though she might have to tarry long.

For twelve long years she sought in vain,
To find a healer for her grief;
And now she comes to try the Lord,
Convinced that He would give relief.
With trembling hand she touched the fringe,
Deemed sacred by her Jewish race,
Hoping to find a speedy cure,
Without beholding His calm face.

That silent touch more strong than words,
Or all the boasted deeds of pride;
Reached there and then the loving heart
Of Him who called her to His side.

It brought a cure without delay,
  Although she tried to shun that face,
Which in the Saviour of mankind
  O'erflowed with love and saving grace.

It could not be—how can she hide
  From Him whose eyes are everywhere?
He bade her come and own the cure,
  Though trembling in her heart with fear.
Such kindly words fell from His lips,
  As never dropped from mortal tongue,
'Thy faith hath saved thee—go in peace,'
  Thy touch a perfect cure hath won.

There is an outer fringe to touch,
  Which Christ Himself hath left behind;
Those means of grace faith's hand must press,
  If you His blessing wish to find.
You need not tremble at Christ's feet,
  Like her who came to tell her deed;
How should that Lord refuse your cry,
  Who will not break the bruised reed!

Then draw ye nigh lost sons of toil,
  Break through the crowd that hides His view;
Christ longs to be approached by men,
  He's looking out for such as you.
What is the plague which troubles thee,
  Is it some pain which wears thy frame,
Or grief of mind which man can't cure?
  Reach forth thine hand—He's still the same!

Yes! touch with faith that yearning heart
Which blessings free doth still impart:
Thy body's ills He may not cure,
But He shall help thee to endure
Whatever thou art called to bear,
If to His feet thou wilt repair.
The thoughtless crowd may stay outside
Heedless of all which may betide;
But draw thou nigh with all thy soul
And let no crowd thy will control;
Christ longs to give thee His release,
Go then to Him—and be at peace.

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity.—II.

'He said unto them, give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth.'

St. Matthew ix. 24. and *St. Mark* v. 21—43.

ON Capernaum's peaceful shore,
An eager crowd one morn was seen;
Looking across the peaceful lake,
Which yesterday so wild had been;

Waiting to catch a nearer view
Of Him whose presence they desired,
Now crossing over in a boat,
The sight of which new hopes inspired.

When Christ that city now had reached
Where many cures by Him were wrought;
The tongue of rumour quickly told
Where healing power might then be sought.

A ruler of the synagogue,
Who oft had heard our Lord explain
The law and prophecies of old;
Now came to search for Him again.

Deep was the grief in his dark home
From which arose the mourner's cry;
And Jairus felt it when he said—
'Come down at once before she die.'

His only child was stricken down;
The lengthening shadows of her day,
Whispered to every looker on,
That life was ebbing fast away.

She was a maid of tender years,
Just opening out to hail the sun;
Like some fair rosebud in the spring
Which by the wind is rudely torn.

While making for the ruler's house
And lingering o'er a wondrous deed;
The servants came and brought the news—
'Thy child is gone—her life hath fled!'

Oh! who shall cheer the father now
And calm the anguish of his soul?
The Master will—'Fear not He said—
Only believe'—'she shall be whole.'

If words in season do befriend,
And sympathy is sometimes sweet;
Methinks they must that hour have led
One broken heart with joy to beat.

With willing steps Christ bent His way
To look on that cold lifeless form,
Which lay outstretched, upon a couch,
Just killed by death's resistless storm.

With folded hands and raven locks,
She seemed to rest as one asleep;
For beauty lingers o'er that face
Where death his early watch doth keep.

No sound did break the stillness there,
Except the noise of funeral chant,
Or cries of mourning from those friends
Who never yet Christ's power had learnt.

'Give place'—He cried—'the maid but sleeps,'
I come to wake her from her dream;
These wailing sounds have no part here,
Soon o'er her face life's rays shall gleam.

Then grasped He in His living hand
That lifeless hand which death had stilled,
And spoke to her such kindly words,
That every heart with hope was filled:

'My little lamb'—He said—'arise'*
Look thou on Me the Lord of all;
And then her spirit came again,
As wakes a child at mother's call.

Great was the awe which fell on those
Who had bewailed this grievous loss,
When they beheld her rise and speak,
And saw life's stream resume its course.

'*Talitha cumi*,' contains a term of endearment derived from a Syrian word signifying 'lamb,' often applied by fond parents to their children. It is as if the Good Shepherd had said, 'My little lamb, I say unto thee arise.—*Macmillan.*

With tenderest thought he bade them bring
Some food to cheer her sinking frame;
Then charged them straitly as they went,
No rumour of the deed to name.

'In quietness and confidence'—depend:
We often lose by idle words we spend;
Go on your way, and lean on Him who knows
Your secret wants, and gives His sweet repose:
There's nothing hid or lost which He sees not,
There's not a sigh or prayer by Him forgot;
Each flower you see is painted by His skill,
Each planet in the sky obeys His will.
Wait for His hand to grasp your timid soul,
Yes! wait in faith, till years have ceased to roll
He will return at earth's last Easter day,
To call the dead from graves wherein they lay,
And wake all saints from that unbroken sleep,
O'er which His eye her faithful watch doth keep.

Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity.

'Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.'—*St. John* vi. 12.

'NOTHING be lost'—Such is our Master's plan,
Though trampled under foot by heedless man:
The heavy clouds seen floating in the sky,
Gather the crystal drops which they supply;
The waving boughs on forest trees so gay,
Are fed by their own leaves when they decay:
Nought would be lost—if we were led to say,
'Oh! gather up the fragments of the day.'

The mighty ocean with its rolling waves,
Receives again the mists which it displays;
The golden sun which shines on glowing days,
Gives back to earth the fragment of its rays.
There's 'nothing lost' in fair creation's breast,
From early dawn to evening's hour of rest;
Her stores are kept by that All-seeing mind,
Which bids us gather up what we can find.

This needful truth, our blessed Lord proclaimed
To hungry pilgrims who His steps waylaid;
Before the setting sun forsook that spot
Where evening twilight shades are soon forgot—
Plain was the food which satisfied His love,
Five barley loaves and fish—no dainties prove;
Plain too those words which to His own He spake,
'Oh! gather up the fragments that ye take.'

What gains they found, who travelled far from home,
To meet with Him who bids the weary come!
Reclining on the grass where they had stood,
He gave to them far more than mortal food:
Could they forget that wondrous love and power,
Which overflowed for them that evening hour;
Or all those fragments left around their feet,
Then gathered up for other mouths to eat!

Look at the throng—in companies they rest,
Like garden beds a skilful hand hath drest;
Where varied flowers with colours gay and bright,
In silence wait to catch the falling light;
The light which lends to all some lovely shade,
Painting the lofty sky and lowly blade.
The meal is done—farewell to hunger's pain—
Twelve baskets full of broken food remain!

Like waving corn or leaves upon the tree,
We cannot count the remnants which we see;
We only know that every little thing
Which God hath made—some glory true may bring.

'Tis not our years alone we must redeem,
But all which tends to form life's daily theme;
Fragments gained—fragments lost—whate'er they be;
Each basket fill—the Master says—for Me!

Shall we *forget* the lesson of this day,
Taught by our Lord to help us on life's way:
Or shall we look with Him upon the ground,
To see what wasted crumbs may there be found.
Our sun is sinking fast below the plain,
The twilight of old age we may not gain;
And failing years too often cry in vain,
'Oh! gather up the fragments that remain.

St. Andrew's Day.

'And He saith unto them, follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.'—*St. Matt.* iv. 19.

HOW sweet those fellowships in life,
Which love's endearing smiles cement,
They seem like rays of morning light
On kindly errands ever sent;
But sweeter far they surely prove,
When gently swayed by God's own grace,
They prompt a brother's heart to lead
Some wanderer here to see Christ's face.

'Twas thus Saint Andrew one day brough
His brother Simon to the Lord,
Resolved that he should look on Him
And listen to His saving word.

Oh! happy ye who thus entwine
Some earthly child now owned as thine
And give to him such Heavenly lore,
As love for souls alone can store;
Not frail memorials of thy power,
Which wither like a gathered flower;
But those which shall for ever live
To tell of blessings thou didst give.

Yet later on these two were met
By Jesus toiling at their net;
And when they saw His mighty power
Which brought them fish one evening hour,
He bade them both desert the lake
And now their homely craft forsake;
Be fishers true for souls alone
With nets which He himself would own.
Yes! fishers now in waters deep
Where living souls too calmly sleep,
And in that counter-flowing tide,
Where unbelief and sinful pride
Refuse to take the bait we cast,
Though life's rough stream be running fast.

What lessons true have we to learn
From toils which meet with small return,
From casting on the waters deep,
Till hope herself is rocked to sleep!
Seek we to go where we are sent,
Though days and nights seem vainly spent;
To trust in Him who on the lake
Filled empty nets until they brake.

Grant blessèd Lord that we may be,
Like Andrew quick to follow Thee,
Let down the net with faithful heart,
And seek to act a brother's part.

St. Thomas' Day.

'Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.'
St. John xx. 27.

FOR one long week, no ray of light
Lit up the darkness of that night,
Which when it lost 'The Morning Star,'
Left one sad soul to wander far:
His fellow men rejoiced in heart,
And in Christ's presence found their part
But Thomas closed to them his ear,
Until his risen Lord drew near.

Oh! wondrous love that sought him out,
And would not leave him still to doubt;
Which could not bear to hear him mourn,
And therefore said to him alone:
'Reach forth thy hand, and thrust it in,
Here is the wound-print made for sin,
These hands and feet which thou dost see
Were pierced to draw all hearts to Me.'

Then looked he up to Christ and said—
'My Lord and God, whom I receive';
But Jesus said—'More blest are they,
Who never see, and yet believe.'

Keep us O Lord from selfish pride,
And sinful doubts which range too wide:
Redeemed by thine Almighty power
May we improve the passing hour,
And never waste in idle dreams,
The light which now so brightly gleams.

The Conversion of St. Paul.

'Enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul,
of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth!'
Acts ix. 11.

'I SINNED through ignorance and unbelief
And therefore mercy great obtained';
So wrote Saint Paul, who gloried in the Lord,
When he His grace had freely gained.

If we with honest aim obey God's will,
There is this anchor for *our* hope,
That we like him the truth shall surely find,
And not in darkness always grope.*

Strange was the way by which this saint was led,
To own the Lord whom he defied:
A vision bright from heaven with piercing cry,
Revealed the truth which nought could hide.

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* *St. John* vii. 17.—'If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.'

Three days he passed on earth with loss of sight,
As if the light must slowly come
To him who had so many saints oppressed,
When bringing slaughter to the home.

As the loud crying of a new-born child,
Makes known the life which burns within;
So those few telling words—'Behold he prays!'
Proclaimed Saul's new-born grief for sin.

Oh blessed day! which led his zealous soul
To spend its zeal for Christ alone,
Counting all loss that he might gain the prize,
Which was to him for years unknown.

Teach us O Lord to see by his new life,
How in the darkest hour of night,
Thy grace divine may still be hovering nigh,
To shed on souls its saving light.

And they who think but little of Thy love,
Wasting alas their precious days!
Lead them to breathe that first-born cry of life
Which caught Thine ear—'Behold he prays.'

Yea more—Make them to know that higher song
'To live is Christ, to die is gain;'
Then will they rise aloft on heaven-born wings,
And chant the same exalted strain.

The Presentation of Christ in the Temple,

COMMONLY CALLED

THE PURIFICATION OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN.

'And when the days of her purification .... were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem, to present Him to the Lord .... and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord.'

St. Luke ii. 22-24.

A VIRGIN pure was seen one day,
As on her breast an Infant lay,
Bending her steps along the way,
To God's own house.

And when the holy gifts were laid
Upon the altar by the Maid;
Oh! who shall tell the love portrayed
On her calm face:

Or that true peace which fell around
The aged Simeon, when he found
The Holy Child in swaddlings bound,
Was this world's Light.

With rapture filled and great delight,
He eyed with joy the welcome sight,
Then straightway poured a song too bright
For earth to raise.

It echoed loud along the roof,
As if to wake both deaf and mute,
Speaking alike to age and youth,
Of God's true peace.

A widow too of fourscore years,
Who fasted oft with many prayers,
Before the Holy Child appears
And offers thanks.

Oh! welcome thought, that we like them
May raise our Eucharistic hymn,
When we're allowed to see that Face
Which beamed with rays of light and grace,
And hear those voices evermore
Compared by Him to ocean's roar. *

All Christian mothers whom we know
When saved by God in childbirth's woe,
Should imitate that holy zeal
Which in God's house delights to kneel,
Presenting offerings as of old,
To the Redeemer of the world.
Then shall they have their faith made strong
To chant old Simeon's peaceful song:
Receive from Heaven the same pure light,
Which shone on waiting souls so bright;
Live in *their* hope and pass to rest,
Reclining on the Saviour's breast.

* *Revelation* xix. 6.—'As the voice of many waters.'

St. Matthias' Day.

'And the lot fell on Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.'—*Acts* i. 26.

'TIS honour great to be a link
In that true Apostolic chain,
Which Christ designed to rule His Church,
Till every foe shall own His reign. *

The traitor fell by Satan's power,
Beguiled by money's subtle art;
And Saint Matthias took his place,
To act on earth a better part.

Chosen by lot, and earnest prayer
To Him who is our living Head;
He had the witness of Christ's seal,
To testify to what he said.

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* 'He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet.'—1 *Corinthians* xv. 25.

With widening stream, we see the Church
  Like some broad river gathering force
From every rill which lends its aid
  To swell her waters in their course.

From age to age she sows the seed,
  In days of trial and of rest,
Her mission and her truths the same,
  Which by her saints were first confessed.

'Twas Christ who early chose the Twelve
  To be the rulers of His flock,
And they for Him laid hands on more,
  Still building on the self-same Rock.

Thus duly called, her pastors teach
  With warrant sure, though often tried
By ignorance and unbelief,
  Which draw so many souls aside.

Aside from Him who is their life,
  Their Saviour and eternal Friend,
Who wills that all men should be saved,
  And share the bliss which knows no end.

O Truth incarnate!—do Thou guide
  The bishops in their rightful choice;
Then through Thy wisdom we shall see
  Thy Holy Church in Thee rejoice.

The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

'And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.'—*St. Luke* i. 38.

HOW blest the truth by Gabriel told
Respecting Jesus and His birth;
'Conceivèd by the Holy Ghost,'
And born of virgin pure on earth!
His power as God we all can see,
His sympathy as man we know;
Where both are centred in one Friend,
What blessings can He not bestow!

When mysteries deep beset your path,
'Behold the handmaid of the Lord';
And mark her words so calm and true—
'Be it according to thy word.'
What issues hung upon her faith,
We on this earth can ne'er repeat;
Oh! see that you like her are found,
A willing child at Jesu's feet.

God's will is best, whate'er it be,
And Mary found it even so,
For looking at her sinless child,
She learnt from Him God's will to do.
The honour too which she received,
No words of man can ever tell,
Or the deep mystery of that birth,
Which gave to us 'Emmanuel!'

In after years when Christ did teach,
A mother thus her faith confessed;
'Blest be the womb which Thou didst know,
And the bosom by Thy lips once pressed.'
But He replied—'Yea, rather bless'd,
Are they who learn God's will to fear,
Striving to keep His holy laws,
And His unchanging word revere.'

This blessing great shall now be yours,
If you obey the Father's will,
Confiding in His wisdom sure,
And bidding your proud heart be still.
The counsels of His changeless love
Can never fail in their decree;
Be this your aim—be this your prayer—
'Incline my heart to follow Thee.'

St. Mark's Day.

'He came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.'—*Acts* xii. 12.

AS one of four pure crystal streams,
The holy Gospel of Saint Mark,
Rolls on to join that boundless sea
Where rests the great eternal ark;
The ark which bears us onward now
Across the rolling waves of care,
To join the souls which sleep in Christ,
Strangers to sorrow and to fear.

Blest with a mother in the faith,
In whose abode the early saints,
Prayed for Saint Peter in his chains,
His was the love which rarely faints:
Once halted he in duty's path, *
And left his comrades on the road;
But soon he waved the flag again, †
True to his Master and his God.

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* *Acts* xv. 38.—'Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.'

† 2 *Timothy* iv. 11.—'Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.'

His calling too he sealed with blood,
  Another martyr in that host
Which prove by death the faith they have,
  In that bright crown by sinners lost.
Though weak and wavering in our course,
  Help us O Lord to persevere;
Until like him we gain the prize,
  And leave behind our perils here.

St. Philip and St. James's Day.

'Now the names of the twelve apostles are these . . . . Philip, James, &c.'—*St. Matt.* x. 3.

THIS day two saints our thoughts engage,
Saint Philip and Saint James;
Both rulers in the early Church,
Enriched by holy names.
When girt around by hungry crowds,
We read how Christ did prove
Saint Philip, with a question strange,
To test his faith and love.

When certain Greeks expressed a wish
To know the Lord of grace,
He told their wants to Jesus Christ,
That they might see His face.
And once in doubt, he asked to see *
The Father's presence sure,
Not knowing Jesus was the God,
Whom he beheld that hour.

---

* *St. John* xiv. 8, 9.—'Philip saith unto Him, Lord, shew us the Father . . . . Jesus saith unto him . . . . he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.'

The other saint is styled 'The Just,'
So spotless was his fame:
For thirty years he ruled the Church
Where Jesus met with shame.
Both saints as martyrs proved their faith,
True signs of honest zeal,
And joined the great victorious host,
To share with them their weal.

Oh! honour great to be enrolled
In Christ's selected band:
Like precious stones in Aaron's breast
Engraved by God's own hand:
That breastplate had its lessons true
For every Jewish heart;
It spoke of tribes designed by God,
To have in Him their part;
It spoke of One who is our Priest
To plead in heaven for all,
Bearing our wants upon His breast,
If we on Him will call.

And they who formed the sacred Twelve
Were teachers for their Lord,
Ambassadors for our High Priest,
And heralds of His word.
Oh! let us hang upon their lips
As they did on the Light,
Then Christ their Lord will reckon us
Among His jewels bright!

St. Barnabas the Apostle.

. . . . 'Who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, which is being interpreted, the "Son of Consolation."'
Acts iv. 36.

JESU God of Consolation,
Whose blood was shed for all mankind;
Pour down on us Thy heavenly grace,
Making us a holy nation.

Lead our hearts to lessen sadness,
And heal the wounds which sin hath made;
Anointing souls in sore distress,
With Thy balm and 'oil of gladness.'

Make us 'sons of consolation,'
Like that blest saint we now revere,
Who laid his riches at Thy feet, *
Filled with love and self-oblation.

---

* *Acts* iv. 37.—'Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.'

This world is like a crowded ward,
With divers ills on every side;
Like Barnabas have you no alms
To spend on griefs so thickly stored?

Some hearts are pressed with heavy care,
For these have you no kindly word;
No charity to aid those homes
Where hunger hides her slender fare?

O happy saint scarce known to man,
When thou thy heaven-born course began;
Warmed by the Comforter divine, †
True love in thee was made to shine:
None on this earth shall ever know
What blessings true thou did'st bestow;
Yet memory dear delights to praise
Those deeds which brightened weary days;
And thy name will ever mention
As the 'Son of Consolation.'

† *Acts* xi. 24.—'He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.'

St. John the Baptist's Day.

'And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways.'—*St. Luke* i. 76.

A CHOSEN son raised up by God
To preach the tidings of His word;
Saint John was filled with holy fire,*
Ere he was clad in child's attire.
In the bleak desert far alone,
Where wild beasts prey and breezes moan;
Proud scribes and priests discerned his choice,
And quailed beneath his fearless voice.

Yes—thousands flocked to hear that word
Which fell upon the surging crowd;
Some left their coffers and their wares,
Some raised to God more earnest prayers:
Parent and child, bright youth and age
Pressed on to hear the mighty sage;
If some few wept, yet fewer smiled,
Awed by that voice which ne'er beguiled.

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* *St. Luke* i. 15.—'He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.'

With simple dress and food as plain,
Who could his burning zeal disdain?
Here was Elijah long foretold,
With tongue of fire and heart as bold.
He preached repentance far and near,
Bidding each hardened heart unbare,
And 'Bring forth fruits to show for heaven,'
Proving the faith which God had given.

Had he refused to chide dark crime,
He might have lengthened out his time;
The light he threw on Herod's shame,
Brought deadly hatred on his name.
Inspired with bold and fearless zeal,
He braved the tide of woe and weal;
Till caught at last through woman's art,
He died in prison by murderer's shaft.

Such heralds brave we need again,
To save the souls which vice hath slain,
And wave Christ's banners far and wide
O'er dark abodes where crime doth hide.
The key to all the Baptist's force,
We learn as we retrace his course;
Inspired by God the Holy Ghost,
He feared for none, except the lost!

St. Peter's Day.

'When Jesus beheld him, He said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a stone.'—*St. John* i. 42.

SAINT Peter sometimes failed to prove
The courage which we look to find;
When sorely tried he fell away,
Like other men of zealous mind.

Yet this was he by Christ compared
To some huge rock of hardened stone,
Round which the waves are seen to sport,
With rolling tide and angry moan.

The storm upon the heaving lake,
And winds which howled around his ears,
Led him to sink, for want of faith
In Him who should have stayed his fears.

The question by a servant maid
When sitting in the Judgment Hall,
Revealed once more a lack of strength,
And he denied before them all.

Though failing oft, he was restored
By the firm hand of his dear Lord;
Thrice charged by Him to feed the flock,
Thrice pointed to his broken word.

We may like him too much depend
Upon the glowing love we bear,
And fall away in danger's hour,
O'ercome awhile by sudden fear;

Then rise again renewed by grace,
To serve our Lord with better zeal,
And like this saint, do even more
To witness for the love we feel;

Yes! more to show by bitter tears
That we bewail all wilful sin,
And more to prove by burning words,
How we can strive lost souls to win.

His Pentecostal sermon fell
Like waters on a barren soil;
Three thousand souls were won for Christ,
The blessèd fruits of one hour's toil.

Oh! as he looked upon that spoil,
Methinks he never could forget,
The Master's words about lost souls,
Whom he should catch with His own net.

Strive ye to lean on that firm rock
Which his new name was made to tell;
Trust less in self and more in God,
Then trials here will end right well.

As pastors called to feed the sheep,
  Redeemed on earth with many tears;
Give us O Lord the grace we need,
  To keep our hearts from needless fears.

Soon will our daily toil be done,
  Soon will life's rolling sea be crossed;
Stretch forth Thine hand whene'er we sink,
  Lest on the ocean we be lost.

St. James the Apostle.

'Ye shall drink indeed of My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give.'
St. Matthew xx. 23.

SAINT James a brother of that saint,
Whose love the Church delights to paint,
Was privileged on earth to see.
Strange sights reserved for only three;
He saw the Lord revealed in glory,
Upon the mount of cloudless beauty,
And gazed upon that dazzling light
Which pierced the darkness of the night.

He stood beside that silent bed,
Where fell asleep a little maid,
And heard the Saviour's voice of love
Recall her spirit from above:
He slept amid Gethsemane's bowers
In that dark night of weary hours,
When Jesus wept and cried aloud
And drank the cup ordained by God.

Like other saints he shared reproof,
When thoughts too high engrossed His mind *
About the glory kept for those,
Who treasures great in heaven shall find:
And when aggrieved, he asked for fire †
Unmindful of that calm control,
Which wins its way by gentle means,
And strives by words of love to rule.

The Church of God like some wide stream
Pursues her way through varied weather;
One day her waters calmly flow
The next appear a turbid river;
Yet onward still it speeds its course
Both in summer and in winter,
Until it joins the boundless sea
Mingling with its waves for ever.
If all her sons were innocent,
Without one single spot or stain;
We might believe we had no part
With saintly lives we wish to gain.
Teach us O Lord by their defects
Our need of watchfulness and prayer,
And hide our sins beneath Thy robe
That we their bliss may fully share.

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* *St. Matthew* xx. 20–24.

† *St. Luke* ix. 54.—'Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them.'

St. Bartholomew the Apostle.

'Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!'
St. John i. 47.

'TIS hard to paint a godly life
Like that of Saint Bartholomew,
When many deeds we fain would tell
In Holy Writ we cannot view.
Told by Saint Philip of his Lord,
He would not brook a Nazarene;
But when induced to 'come and see,'
He saw how blinded he had been.
Those searching words about the tree, *
Where he his soul in prayer outpoured,
Pierced through his heart, and made him feel
That Jesus was his God and Lord.

Great was the praise Nathanael found
When first he caught the Master's smile,
And heard from Him those gracious words,
'Behold a man who has no guile.'

---

* *St. John* i. 48.—'When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.'

To him the promise then was given,
'Still greater things thou yet shalt see,'
Words which were soon to him fulfilled
Beside the lake of Galilee: *
Though still the truth remained untold
With all the fulness of the prize,
For we must wait till Christ returns, †
To satisfy our longing eyes.

Oh! happy they who have 'no guile,'
And like to rest in prayer awhile;
To soar by noonday or at night,
Above the clouds which veil their sight:
Such souls shall know the strength faith brings,
When 'mounting up on eagles' wings;'
And hear on earth that loving voice,
Which fixed for ever this man's choice.

* *St. John* xxi. 1, 2.—'Jesus shewed Himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias . . . and there were together Simon Peter . . . and Nathanael . . .'

† *St. John* i. 51.—'Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'

St. Matthew the Apostle.

'As Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He saith unto him, Follow Me. And he arose, and followed Him.'—*St. Matthew* ix. 9.

HOW many pearls are lost to sight
Beneath the ocean's rolling deep;
Until the diver seeks to find
The prize which others fail to reap.

The Eternal Spirit watches all
In crowded courts or alleys low,
And sometimes calls a longing heart
From scenes of wretchedness and woe.

While 'sitting at the custom seat,'
Exacting dues too often wrong;
Saint Matthew heard a solemn call
To rise and leave the heedless throng.

That gentle voice which reached his ears,
He'd often listened to before;
Hard by the spot where tolls were paid,
When Jesus taught upon the shore; *

* 'Life of the Messiah.'—*Edersheim*, vol. i. page 514, 515, 518.

Or in the synagogue, when Christ
  Stood up to read the ancient law;
Unfolding then to Jewish minds,
  The boundless riches of His store.

His heart was therefore far away
  From those who clustered round his seat,
Conscious of gains which he had found
  By sitting meekly at Christ's feet.

For he had gathered from His lips
  Some words about the promised rest
Bestowed on those who come to Him,
  With hearts laid bare and sins confessed.

We cannot tell how long he sighed
  To cast aside the weary yoke;
We only know his heart replied
  As soon as ever Jesus spoke.

With silent awe he heard the call,
  As though he marvelled at the word;
Despised by all—how could *he* hope
  To be so honoured by the Lord.

At once he rose to follow Him,
  And left behind the wrangling mart;
Content to quit the treasure there,
  And find new treasures for his heart.

Whatever be your calling here,
  However hard to do it right,
Learn from St. Matthew to be still,
  And wait in patience for new light.

God knows your need and hears your cry;
Be then contented and remain;
Until you are called like this blest saint,
To find through Christ some higher gain.

St. Michael and All Angels.

'Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.'
Hebrews i. 14.

YE angels of pure light who dwell on high,
And had your great primeval birth
Ages before the sun and moon appeared,
Or fallen man had trod this earth:

Whose hands are quickly raised to sweep your harps,
When one repenting soul is seen
To give its life to God with sorrow true,
And leave the mire where it had been:

Ye spirits blest who come to guard our way,
And save us from the hidden foe,
Which we could never see about our path,
Nor by our own strength overthrow.

We think this day upon thy ministering powers
And deeds of might—how thou didst bring
God's messages of trust to faithful souls,
With lightning speed and joyous wing.

The war if not in heaven, yet still on earth, *
  Now rages with contending host;
And we require angelic powers to fight
  Against the foe by which we're lost.

We're told that children here have angel guards
  To watch and shield their infant days,
Who ever 'see their Heavenly Father's face,'
  And speed to do whate'er He says.

We know that ye have watched from age to age,
  The rise and fall of erring man,
Guarding the tree of life when we had sinned,
  And pondering o'er redemption's plan.

And when our sun is sinking down to rest
  Behind the waves which gird this shore,
Ye come again to bear the faithful soul
  Where storms and tempests swell no more.

How can we magnify thy deeds aright,
  And tell of blessings not revealed,
Before we reach those realms of cloudless light,
  Where all thy love will be unsealed!

* *Revelation* xii. 7.—'There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon.'

St. Luke the Evangelist.

'Luke the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.'
Colossians iv. 14.

TO be a healer of life's mortal griefs,
To lighten their oppressive weight;
This art by man will be for ever prized
For all have sickness to narrate.
But who shall paint that higher crown of life,
Or those bright jewels kept in store
For him who carries out Christ's last command,
And wins lost souls by wisdom's power.

Such was the man we celebrate this day,
Whose pen records those hymns of praise *
We love to chant as holy songs of joy,
When in God's house our hearts we raise.
Born in that town where Christians first were named,
The friend and comrade of Saint Paul,
He plied with him his healing work of love,
Proclaiming Jesus unto all.

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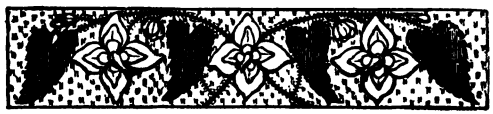
* Magnificat. Benedictus. Nunc Dimittis.

When Demas turned aside from duty's path,
The world too strong for his frail soul,
Saint Luke stood firm, like some well rooted tree,*
On which the winds have no control.
Thou great Physician of all souls,
Who called this servant to be Thine,
Vouchsafe to heal the wounds which sin hath made,
'By pouring in both oil and wine.'

* 2 Timothy iv. 10, 11.—'Demas hath forsaken me .... only Luke is with me.'



St. Simon and St. Jude, Apostles.

'That ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.'—*St. Jude* 3.

LIKE stately columns in some holy shrine,
On which the fabric seems to lean,
Where vaulted roof and lofty arch look down
On cloistered aisle and hallowed scene;
So are the Twelve whom Jesus Christ ordained
To be the founders of His band;
The pillars great erected by His love,
On which the Church might firmly stand.

This day we meet to celebrate two saints
Who toiled for Christ, and won their rest;
One apostolic faith inspired their hearts,
And in that faith they onward pressed:
We know but little of their many deeds,
We only know they served Christ well;
They bravely fought beneath His banner here,
And in such lives we see Him dwell.

We read Thaddeus thus addressed the Lord—
'How wilt Thou manifest Thyself?' *
Expecting then some kingly deed to see,
By which He would reveal His help.

Plain were the words which he from Christ received
About the favours which he sought:
There is no royal road for us to know,
When to His footstool we are brought.

With such as do His will He will remain,
A faithful friend whate'er betide;
The Father too on these will ever smile,
And 'with the Son Himself abide.' †

'For that pure faith delivered to the saints,'
This herald true bids all 'contend,'
And with the Apostolic Church believe
The truth he did so well defend.

For all those saints who glorified their Lord,
And true disciples without number;
We laud and magnify His name,
As o'er their lives we meet to ponder.

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* *St. John* xiv. 22.—'Judas saith unto Him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world?'

† *St. John* xiv. 23.—'If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.'

NOTE.—St. Jude is also called Judas, Thaddeus, and Lebbaus.

May we O Lord with them Thy truth maintain,
Contending for the ancient creed,
And when the Book of Life by Thee is read,
May our own names be then unsealed!

All Saints' Day.

'A great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.'
Revelation vii. 9.

AS the streams which lofty hills do sever,
Their waters blend to swell the flowing river;
So God's true saints make up a mighty throng,
Though parted now by distance or by tongue.

This day the Church doth gather into one,
All saints on earth and those whose race is run;
The soldiers brave, still fighting on the plain,
The warriors dead, who sleep on land or main.

We meet to think on names and lives of old,
E'en though their names and deeds have ne'er been told;
How dwelling here, they led a holy life,
At peace with God, and strangers to all strife.

There's many a flower seen growing on a bank
Where the moss lies thick and the reeds are rank,
Which sheds its perfume in the quiet lane,
Where the traveller's steps are rarely seen:

And there are saintly lives, with deeds unknown
Beyond the home where their good seed is sown;
The peaceful round of each returning day,
Another step along the narrow way.

The ivy clings to the deserted tree,
Whose withered trunk speaks only of decay;
And hearts will cling to friends now far away,
Whose worth they knew—whose life they could not stay.

This day comes round to bring them to our mind,
And make us pray that we their rest may find;
To raise our thoughts above the scenes of earth,
Lest we forget the purpose of our birth.

For all the blessed saints we give God praise,
For all their works of faith, our song we raise;
Praise for the grace and zeal which urged them on,
Praise for the glorious prize which they have won.

O Thou on whom the faithful ever lean,
Fountain of life and blessings yet unseen;
Help us to follow those who rest with Thee,
And lay up treasures for eternity!

Holy Communion.

SWEET is the fellowship we hold
With kindred souls we meet below;
We tell to them our hidden thoughts,
And share with them our joy and woe:
But better still to soar on high,
Like eagles in their upward flight,
And touch the heart which knows our wants,
The Fountain of eternal light.

The Paschal Lamb was duly killed
When Israel's host their triumph gained;
But Christ hath done far more for us
By that great victory He obtained;
Yes! more to roll away the shame
Arising from the curse of sin;
To give us back our blessings lost,
And to ourselves new treasures bring.

To celebrate this mighty love,
We kneel before His holy feast,
And feed upon the Bread of Life,
Like her who craved one crumb at least:
We hold with Him communion sweet,
Then rise refreshed for life's great race,
Cheered by the thought of Him who died,
To slay the foes we have to face.

Those spirits gone which once we knew,
How nigh they seem though far away,
As we partake of that same food
Which helped them on their heavenly way.
We think we hear their kindly voice
Or see once more their loving smile,
While kneeling low before that Lord
Whom they adored with us awhile.

These tokens of Christ's wondrous death,
Ordained by Him to quicken love;
How can we ever know their worth,
Until we dwell with Him above,
And taste ourselves the higher Feast,
The hidden food to sense untold,
The supper blest with all good things,
The banquet rare surpassing gold.

Public Baptism of Infants.

HERE in these sparkling drops we now may hail
The emblem of true power;
The living stream which Christ Himself outpours
In this His chosen hour.

The cross imprinted on that tender brow,
Bespeaks the one He bare;
The cross we have to own and meekly take,
However hard to wear.

As members of His army here, we're pledged
To fight as soldiers brave
Against the foes which meet us on our way,
Trusting in Christ to save.

We need no means save those which He ordained,
As on life's road we tread;
He is our Captain whom we have to serve—
The Church's living Head.

Take back thine infant then to nurse for Him,
Who took such by the hand;
Teach him to pray and gird his armour on,
That he may firmly stand.

The fight begun this day will need much help,
If he shall win at last;
Cherish his childhood days with gentle care,
And screen them from the blast;

The blast of mildew from a wicked world,
And sins not yet begun;
Earth's tender flowers need water and the light,
With faces toward the sun.

Baptism of such as are of Riper Years.

IF riper years to thee unfold,
That to the font thou ne'er wast brought
By loving hands in early days,
To be baptized and rightly taught:

Come forward now of thy free choice,
And dedicate thy life to God;
Sealing those vows before the Church,
Which plight thee to obey His word.

The Holy Three will meet thee there,
The signs of love on thee be laid,
The covenant be sealed in Heaven,
With all the words true faith hath said.

Received into Christ's Holy Church,
Enrolled among her members now;
Thou must not halt or serve the world,
But guard through life thy solemn vow.

Let memory oft recall this day,
Which saw thy soul betrothed for ever;
Lest fleeting trifles of the hour
From endless joy thy future sever.

Catechism.

'Lovest thou Me more than these? . . . . He saith unto him, Feed My lambs.'—*St. John* xxi. 15.

'LOVEST thou Me?'—The Master said,
'Then feed the lambs' I seek to fold;
The bread of life I leave behind,
To them more precious far than gold.

'Lovest thou Me?'—Then wait on these,
As shepherds watch their snow-white flock;
Lead them beside the 'waters still,'
And shelter them beneath the Rock.

'Lovest thou Me?'—Then never tire,
Or grow impatient of your toil;
I will repay your righteous works,
And on your labours ever smile.

'Lovest thou Me?'—Train them with care,
As gardeners bend their tender plants
To climb the sunny garden wall,
And catch each ray which downward slants.

'Lovest thou Me?'—Give back My love,
As earth returns the dew and rain,
Spreading its mantle far and wide,
Across the hill and lowly plain.

'Lovest thou Me?'—Then trust My power,
Which blessed e'en infants yet unborn,
When they were sleeping in the womb,
Ere they beheld the smiling morn.*

Oh! never say they are too young,
To catch from you some heavenly strain;
The word of truth or simple prayer,
Shall not to them be taught in vain.

'Lovest thou Me?'—Then keep My charge,
Think on those lambs for whom I died;
They need the care of loving hands,
To keep them ever near My side.

The fold is ready o'er the hill,
The door is open for each one;
Oh! leave them not to droop and die,
Like fruit deprived of ripening sun.

* *Jer.* i. 5.—'Before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee.'
St. Luke i. 15.—'And he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.'

Confirmation.

WHO has not watched upon the shore
The waves fast breaking on the sand,
Or foaming round some towering rock,
Which all their fury doth withstand.

These barriers strong they cannot pass,
Their God hath made a firm decree,
And holds within His mighty grasp
The angry surge of every sea.

To have the mind thus firmly fixed,
And bid farewell to wavering thought;
To lean on Jesus as our Rock,
For whom life's battle should be fought;

This is to be confirmed in truth,
And made Christ's stedfast soldiers now;
This is to renounce all evil ways,
And seal by faith the solemn vow.

Come Holy Ghost with sevenfold gifts,
Upon each kneeling form descend,
And strengthen them with help divine,
As on their rugged road they wend.

The tide now rippling on the shore,
  May cease to murmur in the bay,
And spend its fury on some craft,
  Unable to resist its sway.

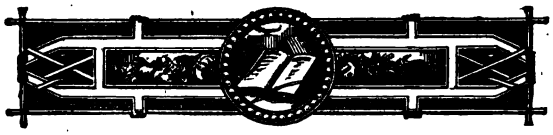
The Bridegroom of the Church is nigh,
  He claims her for His chosen bride;
He is 'our refuge and our strength;'
  Our God to save—our friend to guide:
Trust then in Him who smiled on all
  When going up to Cana's feast,
And who is present with us now,
  To bless the greatest and the least.
With earnest prayer and good resolve,
  Begin thy wedded life this day,
Who lives for God lives too for man
  The heir of immortality.

Visitation of the Sick.

'I was sick, and ye visited Me.'—*St. Matthew* xxv. 36.

AS the hen with outstretched wings
Her little brood doth gather,
To protect them from all harm
In every sort of weather;
So the Church with tender thought
For her children's need prepares,
Bids her shepherds tend the sick,
And remove their dying fears.
Feeding hungry mouths with bread,
Nursing weary ones in pain,
Searching out lost wand'rers here,
Counting on their highest gain;
Praying by the bed of death,
Soothing hearts in sore distress,
Pointing to the Word of Life,
Making burdens somewhat less.

This blessèd work our Lord will own,
Before His angels and mankind,
When He returns to number here,
The many souls He longs to find.
Oh! may those words be said to thee,
'When I was sick—ye visited Me!'



The Communion of the Sick.

WHEN shadows dark steal o'er the room,
Where death itself seems very near;
We break the bread and drink the wine
With earnest hope but trembling fear;
Fear lest our brother never more
In this blest fellowship partake;
Fear lest the hour should prove too short
For this last effort he may make.

As with our eyes we watch the sun
Sink calmly down below the plain,
Casting her shadows far behind,
We know that it will rise again;
And now when looking on the couch
Where faith love's mystery adored,
We know how by the Lord of life
That wasted form will be restored.

While keeping thus Christ's last command
In the sick room of our brother,
We ask for grace to make us one,
As with him we kneel together;
One with all the saints departed,
One with the living saints in thought,
One in the kingdom we are seeking,
By the redemption He has bought.

The Burial of the Dead.

THERE is a solemn awe in death,
Which makes us shrink from its embrace;
We feel this truth when bending o'er
The features of some well-known face;
That marble brow so cold and still,
Those sunken cheeks we loved to kiss,
Those eyes now sealed in their long sleep;
Oh! how they speak of bygone bliss,
Of days when those calm silent lips
Filled the glad cup we loved so well,
And kindly deeds with loving smiles,
Revealed some joys too great to tell:
All these have vanished for a while,
As evening twilight which grows less;
But they will surely come again,
Like early morn in her new dress,
With brighter robes and gay attire,
Put on by Him who is our all:
Such is the news the Church proclaims
By welcome notes to great and small.

There is no death—'tis but a dream,
The suburb of our future heaven,
The portal to those golden streets
Which God Himself to us hath given:

We sleep but to awake again,
Like flowers beneath the hidden soil;
We may seem dead—but still we live
To share the fruits of all our toil.

Christ holds the keys of life and death,
And with His voice, He'll raise the dead;
This is the anthem rolled along
From the churchyard gate to the narrow bed.
Then let us dry the silent tear
Which gives the heart but poor relief;
'Tis vain to gaze on death's cold form,
He is not there—why should we weep?
That sable shroud and coffin lid,
Hides but the ashes 'neath the sod;
The jewel's gone—why eye the shell?
The faithful soul is with its God!

Churching of Women.

'The woman that cometh to give her thanks, must offer accustomed offerings; and if there be a Holy Communion, it is convenient that she receive the Holy Communion.'—*Rubric in Service for Churching of Women.*

THERE 'are some hours when hearts give back
The incense of their praise,
As flowers will shed their perfume sweet,
When warmed by summer rays.

Each token fresh of God's own care,
Sweeps harps tuned by His hand,
And many such repeat their tale
In this our favoured land.

That little babe so lately sent
To swell life's sparkling cup,
Seemeth it not another gift,
Where faith is looking up:

A gift from Him who often spake
Of children on this earth,
And was Himself a little child,
Most lowly in His birth.

To honour God at such a time
A form of thanks is given,
Which if observed by mothers here
May draw them nearer heaven:

Yes! nearer to those realms of bliss
Whence guardian angels come,
And strength is given to bear the pain,
Which darkens childbirth's home.

Some offering too the Church requires
The woman to present,
It may be large or even small,
For God alone 'tis meant.

Yea, nearer still she bids her draw
To her Almighty Head,
And kneel before His holy feast
Ere on life's way she tread.

How blest are they who meekly own
Each treasure when received,
For such warm hearts and faithful souls,
New garlands shall be weaved!

Communion.

SOME steps there are for all to climb;
Who wish to pass the golden gate
And join that multitude of souls,
Who though at rest, yet have to wait;
To wait until the Lord returns,
To give them back a body fair,
Without a wrinkle or a stain;
Like that which He Himself doth wear.

Confession is the first great step,
By which we lay our burden down,
Before the feet of our blest Lord
When bending low before His throne.
The next to reach is penitence,
True sorrow for the sins we know,
Returning to our Father's house,
And seeking in His paths to go,

When these are climbed with steadfast faith,
We stand upon that mighty rock,
Which bears the house by wisdom built
Its walls resisting every shock;

We get the pardon which we need,
For all the sins we may recall,
As kneeling down we see that Cross,
On which was borne the weight of all.

Oh! happy they who climb these steps,
With bended knees and trembling hearts;
Such souls will be refreshed by grace,
From Him whose presence ne'er departs:
Each season of the Holy Church,
Will bring them nearer to their God,
Leave them more rooted in the faith,
And more obedient to His word.

Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea.

He maketh the storms to cease; so that the waves thereof are still.'—*Psalm* cvii. 29.

O'ER the wide waters of the sea,
Where tempests roar and billows foam
We watch our vessel plough her way,
And think of those we left at home.
Be Thou O Lord our Shield and Guide
While sailing on the mighty deep;
We need Thy presence with us here,
Our hearts to cheer, our lives to keep.

The captain firm may keep the watch,
The sailors brave may grasp the helm;
But Thou alone canst check the storms,
Which in their fury rage and swell.
If mists descend, or waves roll high,
And danger seems to haunt the mind,
Where can we look except to Thee,
Who calmed the storm and hushed the wind,

For travellers by land or sea,
We've often raised the upward cry
When kneeling in God's house below;
And now as travellers we draw nigh,
To seek once more that mighty hand
Which rules alike on land and main,
To guide us o'er the pathless waves,
And bring us safely home again.

Ordination.

'After which shall be said or sung by the bishop, (the persons to be ordained priests all kneeling,) Veni Creator: "Come Holy Ghost our souls inspire . . . ."

Rubric in Ordination Service.

THERE are some days in life's short tale
Which change the current of our years:
They come and go—then leave behind
Their expectations or their fears.

Such was the day when we were made
Ambassadors for our great Lord;
Pledged by our ordination vows,
To live for him and teach His Word;
To drive away all 'doctrines false,'
And be 'examples to the flock';
To sow the seeds of love and peace,
And point to Jesus as our Rock;
To obey the rulers of the Church,
Who armed us with our mission true,
And sent us from the altar steps
To bring forth treasures old and new.

Can we forget that solemn hour,
When kneeling down we asked for grace,
'And blesséd unction' from above,
'To anoint and cheer' us on our race;
And then arose, to know we were
No longer sheep to roam the plain,
But shepherds true to feed the flock
For which the Son of God was slain:
The very garments which we wore,
So simple yet so pure and white,
Were emblems of that holy life
Which should adorn the sons of light.

Hear we e'en now that sacred Hymn
'Come Holy Ghost our souls inspire;'
Lest in our work we lose that love
Which is to hearts 'celestial fire.'
Our lamp may flicker in the night
Our oil may cease to feed the flame;
Oh! let us seek the grace we need,
That our first love may never wane.

'Tis glory great beyond all words,
To be a messenger divine,
And wait upon the 'Lord of lords;'
Oh! keep us now and ever Thine—
Thine to watch for souls Thou feedest,
Thine to guard the Church Thou lovest,
Thine to shed the light Thou givest,
Thine to share the crown Thou wearest;
Thine to endure the cross and shame,
If we may honour Thy great Name.

The Royal Accession.

O THOU Who art the King of kings,
Beneath Thine own eternal wings
Protect our gracious Queen:
The waves which guard this favoured land,
Are but the ripples of Thine hand;
On Thee alone we lean.

This day we celebrate the hour,
When Royalty received the power,
To wear the crown and reign.
May coming years for ever smile
Like rays of light upon our isle,
With blessings in their train.

If wars arise on land and main,
Without our God we fight in vain—
Thy victories bestow:
If rulers lack Thy wisdom clear,
Our country's weal to guide and steer—
Thy will teach them to know.

Our ocean empire with its homes,
Wide as the sea which round it foams,
Committed to our care;
On these we ask Thy presence Lord,
With the blest light of that pure word,
Which we so richly share.

Bid angry waves of discord cease,
And hasten on that reign of peace,
When all shall know Thy power:
One Saviour and one God we own,
One Church, one Queen, one earthly Throne,
On these Thy blessings pour.

The Church's Holy Year.

WHILE listening to Creation's voice
Adoring God by day and night,
In anthems loud, which never cease
Proclaiming His eternal might;
The Psalmist points us to the sun,
Seen 'as a giant' on his race;
Rejoicing to put forth his strength,
And gladdening all things with his face.

The earth responding to his call
Drinks in the welcome light obtained;
Her hills and valleys clothed with life,
Fulfilling laws which God ordained;
And when the new-born year has fled,
Whose birth was ushered in with song;
We muse once more upon the past,
And speak of works which it hath done.

Now when the Church hath closed her round
Of days and seasons, freely given
To lead us nearer to 'The Light,'
And make us grow more meet for heaven;
Should we not linger o'er the past
To think upon her gifts awhile;
And ask before we travel on,
What they have done to sweeten toil;

To strengthen that true peace of mind,
Which this world never can impart;
That peace which neutralises woe
And calms the sighings of the heart.

Round our true Sun we have revolved,
From Bethlehem's plain to Calvary's hill;
Until we reached the Holy Mount
Where He bestowed His last farewell:
While lesser lights with saintly lives,
Have lent to us their cheering ray;
Like planets that revolve around
The greater orb which rules the day.

We cannot now recall those hours
Of holy feasts or solemn fasts;
But we may pause, and ask ourselves—
Have we secured the joy which lasts,
Anchored our hope within the veil
Where our Forerunner's gone before;
Beyond the heaving waves of time,
Which beat upon this distant shore?
Where life will be one Holy Year
Of perfect worship and delight,
No longer rolling round the sun,
But spent with Him, who is the Light!

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